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University of Kentucky

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

Denise Clark Lewis

The Graduate School
University of Kentucky

2005

THE INTERSECTION OF FILIAL PIETY AND CULTURAL DISSONANCE:
INTERGENERATIONAL EXCHANGES AMONG KHMER FAMILIES IN THE UNITED
STATES

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
College of Public Health
at the University of Kentucky
By
Denise Clark Lewis
Lexington, Kentucky

Co-Directors:
Dr. B. Jan McCulloch, Professor of Family Social Science, St Paul, Minnesota and
Dr. Laurie Russell Hatch, Professor of Sociology, Lexington, Kentucky

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

THE INTERSECTION OF FILIAL PIETY AND CULTURAL DISSONANCE: INTERGENERATIONAL EXCHANGES AMONG KHMER FAMILIES IN THE UNITED STATES

This study investigates intergenerational exchanges among one Cambodian refugee population residing along the U.S. Gulf of Mexico. The experiences of refugees, who faced massive cultural dissonance and social change, require exploration and analysis in order to understand how intergenerational exchanges change, and what influence such modified exchanges have on family relationships. Cultural dissonance occurs when ideals of one culture grate upon the ideals of the other. An example of cultural dissonance can be found across generations of Khmers living in this particular community. Elder Khmers, who spent significant time in Cambodia, tend to follow notions of collectivity, ancestor veneration, and filial piety. Younger Khmers, who have spent most of their lives in the United States, tend to embrace an American ideology of individuality, autonomy, and youthfulness. Reconciling such cultural dissonance within families led to multiple changes in behaviors and in modification of beliefs surrounding family relations and intergenerational exchanges.

Family exchange theory provides an important tool for researchers interested in addressing intergenerational exchanges and cultural dissonance. With family exchange theory, this dissertation examines ways in which changed life circumstances and cultural transitions shape attitudes, preferences, and behavioral patterns associated with intergenerational exchanges among immigrant and refugee populations. In particular, using family exchange theory, this research begins to answer questions such as how adhesion or retention of cultural ideologies shapes intergenerational exchanges; how families lives within the boundaries of a recreated Khmer village differ from families who live in a more mainstream American community; and, how meanings of appropriate intergenerational exchanges shift in conjunction with changing socio-cultural circumstances. Individuals and collectives engage in exchanges without a necessary expectation that they will receive repayment for that exchange within their own lifetimes. There is, however, the expectation that the collective will benefit. Individual and collective histories inform and are informed by meanings within exchanges. Meanings are not static within family exchange but change with individual and collective consciousness to create and reinforce bonds and provide moral guidance. This dissertation adds to our knowledge of families, immigrants, and theory for understanding intergenerational exchanges.

Keywords: Family Exchange Theory, Cultural Dissonance, Intergenerational Exchange, Family

Denise Clark Lewis
May 6, 2005

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STATES

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A Personal Journey within an Inspirational Network

Like many graduate student researchers, I traveled a circuitous path to get to this work. I grew up in the fifties, sixties, and seventies not thinking much about refugees or immigrants. I knew that my male relatives and friends stood a good chance of going to fight a war in Vietnam that none of us seemed to understand with a group of people with whom we could not identify. The languages and customs of Southeast Asia were not issues of importance to me as I came of age in a small southern farming community. My concerns were with fulfilling what felt like my “natural” role as a wife and, eventually, a mother.

It was not until my own daughter was nearing the time for college that I decided that I, too, should begin the process of learning about the world and how people acted within it. And so, at age forty, I became a college freshman. A desire to learn broadly led me to courses such as American history, biology, anthropology, foreign language, psychology, and chemistry. About the same time that I began to learn of the world outside my small, southern comfort zone, I met a young Vietnamese woman, Lin Ly.

Lin Ly and I were in Spanish, chemistry, and botany classes together. Both thought we might go to medical school. On a trip sponsored by the pre-med honor society, she and I traveled together. She told me of her family’s escape from Vietnam, the beauty of the Vietnamese countryside, the lushness of its forests, and the flavors of its fruit. As she described the life she and her family fled, I realized how nearly monumental was my own ignorance.

It became my quest to learn more about Southeast Asia. Whenever possible, I tailored my papers and assignments around topics dealing with that region. I wanted to understand how my government was involved in what happened in Vietnam and surrounding countries nearly a quarter of a century earlier. I was shocked that I knew so little about what had happened even though reports were on the nightly news and the war was the topic of debates in high school civics classes. To gain an understanding of that time, I reported on the wars in the region for a term paper in American history. The plight of refugees and the problems they encountered during resettlement were not things I had previously known so I interviewed Vietnamese fisherfolk as part of an anthropology project. Those interviews revealed a strong gender difference in experiences so I held focus group discussions with Malaysian university women and reported my findings in a health and culture class. My quest for filling in the vast number of blanks associated with that time and place led me to volunteer to teach English to a Cambodian monk in exchange for learning about Khmer families and Cambodian culture. The elders of the community went to great lengths to introduce me to Khmer music, food, and culture. I learned to perform graceful folk dances, sing along with Khmer Karaoke, and cook traditional Khmer foods. I suspect, during my early visits to the community in 1997, that the people of the village had no idea how hard it would be to get rid of me.

Since that time, the people of Veluvanna Village, especially the elders, have welcomed me into their lives and tolerated my questions about extraordinary, esoteric, and mundane aspects of their existence. The hospitality they have shown me, and others who came to visit—my husband, daughter, mother, and friends, has been overwhelming. They have taught me patience. They have taught me that sharing is more important than accumulating. They have taught me that loving kindness is stronger than aggression.

My own family has also contributed to my wonderful adventure. Without Michael’s steadfast love, devotion, support, and encouragement, I might have abandoned my dream of learning about myself and others long before I reached the end of the path. As Brooke and I moved through college, then she through law school and I through graduate school, she has proven that one’s daughter can be really, really supportive and makes a good gripe-about-the-professors-and-all-the-work-we-do buddy. She has shown me that hard work and lots of studying

can pay off. To my mother, thank you for believing in me and showing me the endless bounds of love. To my father, I wish you could be here so I could hug you and thank you in person. I just have to believe that my love and gratitude travels to you on wisps of incense and in my silent musings.

It is amazing what a chance encounter with one individual can do to change ones' life, so, to my Vietnamese friend, Lin Ly, for starting me on this path; I will never be the same and I thank you for that. To my dear Khmer family and friends, for feeding me, housing me, teaching me to speak your lovely (though difficult) language, and even clothing me, I owe you more than I can ever repay in this lifetime. Bpo Heang, in our next lives, I hope that we all return as one large and loving family.

I also want to thank my wonderful committee for helping me narrow my focus so that I did not try to include all the extraordinary, esoteric, and mundane things I learned during my journey. My co-chairs, Doctors Jan McCulloch and Laurie Russell Hatch, and committee members, Doctors John van Willigen and Nancy Schoenberg, have been the best committee any graduate student could want. All have challenged me to think in different ways and have helped me see to through the forest. As I continue my journey, I will carry with me the many lessons I have learned from each of you.

Everything I have written in this dissertation is from a particular perspective; that of a white middle-aged southern woman. The stories I share in this dissertation are filtered through my own understandings of stories relayed to me first through interpreters, then through my own nascent grasp of the Khmer language. It is my fervent hope that I have portrayed persons and events as accurately as possible within the constraints of doing research. I have striven to protect the confidentiality of all who shared with me the stories of their lives. All names and places have been given pseudonyms. Sometimes, to protect the people who were so generous with their time and the most private parts of their lives, I have created composites to help conceal identities. I have struggled to make certain that I have not painted an overly rosy picture but have provided a glimpse of the love, struggles, changes and challenges that influence this small group of Khmer families.

Each of you has touched my life in wonderful ways. Thank you all for walking with me and supporting me on this amazing journey. To my dear family and friends, may we all live in peace for 200 years.

Khn'yom soam ah'koun

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Southeast Asian Refugees in the United States	1
The Development of Family Exchange Theory.....	3
The Context of the Study	3
The Goals of the Study	4
CHAPTER TWO: A FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING FILIAL PIETY AND ADAPTATIONS.....	6
A Foundation for Filial Piety	6
Culture.....	7
Culture Change	8
Culture, Self, and Family	9
Cultural Dissonance	11
An Historical Context for Practicing Filial Piety in Southeast Asia.....	11
Filial Piety and Elder Reverence.....	11
Living Arrangements in Southeast Asia	13
Caregiving.....	15
Caregiving and Gender	15
Filial Piety in the United States	16
Intergenerational Exchanges and Changing Life Circumstances	16
Rethinking and Reorganizing Family	19
Shifting Roles.....	21
Ethnic Identity.....	21
Reciprocity.....	22
Collective Memory	23
Informal Care Networks	24
Proximity-Based Informal Care Networks	25
Informal Care Networks and Gender.....	25
Fictive-Kin-Based Informal Care Networks.....	26
Networks and Ethnic Enclaves	27
Summary	29
CHAPTER THREE: THEORY	30
A Synthetic Theory for Family Exchange	30
Social Exchange Theory	31
An Individualistic School of Social Exchange Theory.....	32
French School of Social Exchange Theory.....	34
Constructionist Perspectives	35
Intergenerational Ambivalence	37
Family Exchange Theory.....	38
Domains within Family Exchange Theory	39
Building Knowledge through Family Exchange Theory	40
Applying Family Exchange Theory.....	40
Summary	41

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODS	42
An Overview of Ethnographic Methods	42
Participant Observation.....	43
Discussions and Interviews.....	44
Language.....	45
Analysis.....	46
Khmer Elders and their Families	47
Sample Characteristics.....	47
Participant Categories	47
Age.....	47
Proximity.....	48
Sample Size.....	49
Summary	49
CHAPTER FIVE: A VIGNETTE OF PEOPLE AND PLACE.....	50
Finding a Place in the United States	50
Ethnic Communities.....	50
Rural Environments	50
Study Area	51
Khmer Communities.....	51
The Core Community: Veluvanna Village	51
The Surrounding Community: Bay County and Fort Simon	55
Distant Connections: Island Breeze	57
Community Differences.....	59
The Families.....	60
A Complex Web	60
CHAPTER SIX: INTERGENERATIONAL EXCHANGES: A SYNTHESIS AND ANALYSIS.....	63
Lives Touch: Cultures Collide	63
Filial Piety: Veneration and Respect.....	64
Defining Family	64
Interactions across Generations	66
Cultural Collisions: Bending the Tree	67
Beliefs and Behaviors	67
Freedom: Lost and Found	68
Work Takes All My Time.....	69
Isolation and Fear.....	71
Wisdom, Education, and Different Forms of Knowledge	72
Becoming American, Staying Khmer	73
Straddling Two Cultures	73
Left Behind	74
Strength	75
Adapting to Life in the United States	75
Traditions and Tensions.....	75
Education: Age 15 through 24	76
Good Children.....	76
Good Sons	77

Good Daughters	78
Shifting Traditions	78
Growing Families: Age 25 through 39	79
Seeking Success	79
Finding Time to Be Khmer	80
Separated or Lost Families: Age 40 through 60	82
Redefining Identities	82
Making Choices	83
Maintaining Contact.....	84
Arranging Marriages: Finding Love	85
Who We Were: Who We Are	86
Facing Multiple Realities: Age 61 and Over	88
Changing Expectations	88
Flexibility	89
Summary	90
Resiliency and Tenacity	90
CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION.....	92
Water Falling Drop by Drop Eventually Wears a Hole in a Rock.....	92
Family Exchange Theory	92
Central Concepts of Family Exchange Theory	93
Types of exchanges	94
Meanings within exchanges	95
Ambivalence	96
Summary	97
Limitations to the Study.....	98
Methodological Limitations.....	98
Theoretical Limitations	100
Contribution to Gerontology and Family Research	100
REFERENCES	102
APPENDIX.....	114
VITA	134

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1. Extended Families.....	48
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Southeast Asian Refugees in the United States

This study investigates intergenerational exchanges among one Southeast Asian (Cambodian) refugee¹ population residing along the upper region of the Gulf of Mexico. Just as in many other nations, Cambodia has multiple ethnic groups. Ethnically, the dominant group in Cambodia is Khmer. Other ethnicities such as Chinese, Vietnamese, and Cham, represent approximately 5% of the population in Cambodia (Kingdom of Cambodia, n. d.). The language spoken by more than 95% of the people of Cambodia is also Khmer. In this dissertation, I use Khmer to refer to both the people and language of Cambodia. None of the individuals I interviewed were of the minority ethnic groups of Cambodia.

The unique experiences of refugees, who faced massive cultural dissonance and social change, require exploration and analysis in order to understand how intergenerational exchanges function, and what influence such exchanges have on intergenerational relationships. Focusing on refugees is especially important because it brings into relief how cultures adapt and adjust to changing life circumstances.

Over 1.2 million Southeast Asian refugees (primarily from Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam) have been resettled in the United States since 1975. U. S. Census data indicate that the U.S. population of Asian and Pacific Island elders (of which mainland Southeast Asian refugees and immigrants constitute approximately 22%) is projected to increase by 256% by 2020 (U. S. Bureau of the Census, 2000). Experiences of aging refugees and other immigrants have been shown to be significantly different from elders who have not participated in international migration (Ikels, 1998; Villa, 1998). In particular, most elder Southeast Asian refugees lived through extremely traumatic experiences that continue to influence their lives. Once in the United States, refugees often experience long-term effects of racism, marginalization, and stigmatization as they struggle to reconstruct and redefine their own and any remaining family members' lives (Lewis, 2001). Throughout this dissertation I discuss issues that are broadly relevant to most refugees who arrive in the United States. Because information on family life in Cambodia is scarce, I include literature from multiple Southeast Asian cultures (e.g., Cambodia, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam), many of whom share foundational beliefs of filial piety,

¹ Refugees are a unique class of immigrant. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees defines refugees as: "Any person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence, is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it" (UNHCR, 2000).

collectivity, and elder reverence; however, my data are from interviews and interactions with Khmer families in the United States.

Categorization of all persons singularly as “Southeast Asian” when from diverse societies masks differences found within and between each society and often inaccurately presents individual experiences as a homogeneous whole. I chose to use what might be considered a “blanket” term in order to facilitate the synthesis of the literature. Whenever possible, however, I include specific examples to illustrate differences because it is especially important to consider the cultural, social and political historical context that creates refugees’ status because past experiences are reflected in present circumstances (Steckenrider, 1998; Villa, 1998).

Southeast Asian refugees from the mainland countries of Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam most often were resettled in large metropolitan areas such as Long Beach, California or Lowell, Massachusetts, in multiethnic, inner-city housing developments (Smith-Hefner, 1999). Small groups, such as the population described in this dissertation, were resettled in less-metropolitan areas where low cost housing and jobs requiring few skills enabled families to begin rebuilding their lives (Lewis, 2001). Cambodian families living in areas such as the rural refugee community described in this dissertation are especially important to study. In contrast to refugees and immigrants in inner-city housing developments, this community is in a rural setting, most homes are privately owned and the community consists exclusively of Cambodians. I have found no other reports on refugee families living in rural areas of the United States. This research site provides a wonderful laboratory for exploring intergenerational exchanges and ways in which filial piety is manifest within the context of rural life and massive cultural change.

Southeast Asian refugees in the United States have adapted to life far from their homelands with transformed and redefined identities. They have endured and survived as individuals and communities by working hard to preserve ideological traits and characteristics they valued (Lewis, 2001). Southeast Asian refugees have negotiated extreme circumstances that tore at long-held beliefs of who they were, who they had become, and how they interacted with those around them. They also have created multiple communities across the United States (Detzner, 1996, 2004; Lewis, 2001; Smith-Hefner, 1998, 1999). Various pressures on both young and old can change the structure of relationships to create uncertainty and conflict, even where there is considerable intergenerational solidarity (Lüscher & Pillemer, 1998). Intergenerational ambivalence may influence family structures and change family relations relative to exchange of resources such as time, housing, food, care, or financial assets.

The Development of Family Exchange Theory

The development of a family exchange theory occurs through a synthesis of the French School of social exchange theory with social constructionist and intergenerational ambivalence theoretical perspectives. With family exchange theory as its foundation, this dissertation examines ways in which changed life circumstances and cultural transitions shape attitudes, preferences, and behavioral patterns associated with intergenerational exchanges among immigrant and refugee populations. In particular, this research begins to answer questions such as how adhesion or retention of cultural ideologies shapes intergenerational exchanges; how families living within the boundaries of a recreated Khmer village differ from families who live in a more mainstream American community; and, how meanings of appropriate intergenerational exchanges shift in conjunction with changing socio-cultural circumstances.

The Context of the Study

Most literature on family relations has not addressed refugee populations but has focused on nations' dominant ethnic populations (Ball, Pence, Pierre, & Kuehne, 2002; Domingo & Asis, 1995; Jenike, 1997a, 1997b; Knodel & Saengtienchai, 1999; Vesperi, 1997). This growing body of literature on ethnic groups predominantly focuses on literacy (Weinstein, 1998), grandparents raising grandchildren (Glass Jr. & Huneycutt, 2002; Vesperi, 1997; Weibel-Orlando, 1997), or the influence of intergenerational relations on adolescents (Perlmann & Waldinger, 1997; Portes, 1996; Ying, Coombs, & Lee, 1999). Smaller ethnic groups, such as Southeast Asian refugees, have received little consideration of changes in family relations with the notable exceptions of work by Detzner (1996, 2004), Ong (2003), and Smith-Hefner (1998, 1999).

Considerable research exists on Southeast Asian refugees' acculturation (Conquergood, 1992; Daniel & Knudsen, 1995; Foner, 1997; Ong, 1995, 1996; Palinkas & Pickwell, 1995), problems with "language barriers" (Lipsky & Nimol, 1993; Lovell, Tran, & Nguyen, 1987; Stephenson, 1995), differences in health beliefs (Frye, 1991, 1993, 1995; Gordon, 1989; Jenkins, Le, McPhee, Stewart, & Ha, 1996; Kulig, 1995; Stephenson, 1995; Yi, 1996), lack of transferable job skills (Maril, 1995; Moberg & Thomas, 1998), and the prevalence of mental distress (Boehnlein, Kinzie, Ben, & Fleck, 1985; Kleinman, 1998a, 1998b; Knudsen, 1995; Muecke, 1995). However, there has been little investigation into relationships and lived experiences of refugee elders and their families, as they age within the context of life in the United States (Braun, Takamura, & Mougeot, 1996; Detzner, 1996, 2004; Gozdzia, 1989). Few studies have sought to provide a thorough critique of the conflict and solidarity that exist within immigrant and refugee family relations and the implications of such ambivalence on family exchanges as

experienced by aging immigrant and refugee minority families in the United States (Lüscher & Pillemer, 1998).

An understanding of how local knowledges, norms, and behaviors influence exchanges within aging refugee families is difficult without a synthetic theoretical perspective that incorporates histories, multiple knowledges, and meanings of exchanges. Viewing intergenerational exchanges through family exchange theory, a synthesis of the French School of social exchange theory and social constructionist and intergenerational ambivalence perspectives, allows the creation of a more synthetic and useful foundation for describing factors and results associated with refugee families and aging. An up-close view of how refugee families understand and manage conflict and solidarity within intergenerational exchanges expands the knowledge base surrounding intergenerational ambivalence and leads to the creation of a new, more synthetic, theory useful when studying both Western and non-Western families.

The Goals of the Study

This dissertation has two primary goals. The first is to understand how cultural dissonance influences intergenerational exchanges through illuminating ways in which changed life circumstances and cultural transitions shape attitudes, preferences, and behavioral patterns associated with filial piety among immigrant and refugee populations. The second goal is to create and test family exchange theory. Family exchange theory is a theoretical model for understanding why families engage in particular types of intergenerational exchanges, what those exchanges mean to the participants, and how family members experience ambivalence associated with intergenerational exchanges. Family exchange theory adds to emergent theories surrounding family exchanges. In order to address both these goals, this study of families who find themselves living in a society not necessarily of their choosing; a society with dramatically different foundational beliefs and behaviors surrounding expectations within family relations and intergenerational exchanges was developed.

The main research question that addresses both these goals is: How and why do refugee families negotiate or modify intergenerational exchanges and relationships associated with filial piety in the context of massive social and cultural disruption? The specific aims of this research are to understand how life in a mono-ethnic community influences beliefs and behaviors surrounding filial piety, how cultural retention or adhesion influences family exchanges, and to discover what adaptations families make to fulfill obligations associated with filial piety. For example, the cultural ideologies of people who spent significant time in Cambodia tend to follow notions of collectivity, ancestor veneration, and filial piety; cultural ideologies of people who have spent most of their lives in the United States, on the other hand, tend toward individuality,

autonomy, and youthfulness. Cambodian culture and mainstream U.S. culture often are at odds in their most fundamental structures with cultural dissonance the result. Ideals of one culture may grate upon the ideals of the other. Both individual and collective notions of “appropriate” family behavior may change due to changing circumstances. Reconciling such cultural dissonance within families may lead to multiple changes in behaviors and in modification of beliefs surrounding family relations and intergenerational exchanges. This dissertation adds to our knowledge of families, immigrants, and theory for understanding intergenerational exchanges.

CHAPTER TWO: A FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING FILIAL PIETY AND ADAPTATIONS

A Foundation for Filial Piety

Filial piety within Asian families gives shape to the framework of emotions, faithfulness, and love between parents and children and creates hierarchically organized social relations of obedience and respect that open the way to interpret domestic cultural relations (Detzner, 2004; Liem, 1998). Filial piety encompasses a hierarchical relationship across generations with ancestor veneration, respect, obedience, and reverence according to age and gender (Detzner, 2004) at its core. It prescribes obligation and debt to one's elders and has a strong emphasis on extended family networks living in multi-generational households. Filial piety places elders, especially men, in a privileged position over younger family members. Indeed, filial piety preserves the "emotional link between recollection and transgenerational inner reality" (Liem, 1998, p.75) as a path toward continuity of generations and cultural ideologies. Moreover, filial piety provides the rules and laws governing norms for obedience, education, docility, and power. Yet, filial piety also conjures images of "retrograde Confucianism" that may hinder youths' freedom, causes family failures and conflicts, increases domestic violence, and causes resentment across generations when elders' advice is disregarded (Liem, 1998, p. 75).

In Khmer culture, filial piety includes the expectation that daughters and daughters-in-law will provide daily assistance to parents and parents-in-law. Although filial piety has, at its foundation, a patriarchal bias, women in Khmer culture have long held positions of administrative power and respect (Ledgerwood, 1995). Indeed, when reciting the order of reverence one must follow, one's mother is always listed first. Acceptance of norms associated with filial piety may fluctuate with changing circumstances such as found in the families presented in this dissertation.

In this chapter, I explore the foundations for filial piety, particularly that found in mainland Southeast Asia. Understanding the foundational beliefs and behaviors surrounding filial piety, as a central tenet in Cambodian culture, provides a way to better understand changes that occur in beliefs and behaviors once families are residing in the United States. This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section looks at the influence of culture in a very broad sense including culture change, culture, self and family, and cultural dissonance. The second section provides an historical and contextualizing component for understanding foundations of filial practices in Southeast Asia including filial piety, living arrangements and caregiving. The third section in this chapter addresses filial piety among Southeast Asian groups living in the United States. It looks at intergenerational exchanges in the context of changing life circumstances, how families are reorganized, shifts in roles, and type and use of networks. These

topics provide a way to better understand filial piety, cultural dissonance, and adaptations among Southeast Asian immigrant and refugee families living in the United States.

Culture

Culture is embedded within individuals but is revealed in groups who share common traditions and customs regarding beliefs and behaviors. Individuals are enculturated across the generations, that is, they learn rules and norms from observations and interactions with older or more experienced members of cultures. Culture provides a way to locate one's self within a group—or conversely, to identify who is not “of the group.” It provides both individual and collective identities.

Culture, moreover, is the imposition of conventional meaning on experience, or culture creates one's habitus, which is one's way of interacting with body and mind; concomitantly, one's habitus creates one's culture (Bourdieu, 1977). Habitus is the subjective, but not individual, system of internalized structures. It is the coordination of practices and sharing of worldviews. Habitus is produced by history and “produces the individual and collective practices, and hence history, in accordance with the schemes engendered by...history” (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 82). Taussig (1987) states:

It is not that our perception is historically conditioned, that the eye becomes here an organ of history; that sensations are a form of activity and not passive carbon copies of externals, but that the history that informs this activity also informs our understanding of seeing and of history itself (p. 8).

The symbolic nature of cultural existence provides ways of explaining and understanding the world through manipulation of symbols (Lévi-Strauss, 1963). Symbols are given meaning through culture. The use of those symbols reifies understandings of what “culture” represents. Cultures are templates for determining what is right and wrong and how to react to both routine and novel events. Culture provides ways to understand, question, and construct the world and evolves and changes over time (Handwerker, 2002; van Willigen & Lewis, In press).

Active “culture building” (Foner, 1997, p. 963) may take place through conscious effort as human beings construct or make knowledge to provide meanings for existence. Others argue that individuals can neither actively shed nor recreate culture because culture is not a thing to be taken apart, destroyed, lost, rearranged, saved, revitalized, or regained (Handwerker, 2002). Constructed knowledge in the form of culture building is actively achieved and is manifest in self-sustaining and self-renewing interpretations of events, constructed by personal, historical, and political experiences (Gubrium & Holstein, 1999; Schwandt, 1994). As such, culture and notions of culture building are comprised of both individual and collective understandings of

experiences that inform and are informed by the reality of individual lives (Schwandt, 1994). Therefore, culture cannot be lost or regained; however, culture can be changed.

Culture Change

Culture change may occur in various ways, for example, through processes of acculturation (Birman & Tyler, 1994; Cheung, 1995; Clark & Hofsess, 1998; Foner, 1997; Gans, 1997; Palinkas & Pickwell, 1995; Skinner, 2002) or assimilation (Alba & Nee, 1997; Foner, 1997; Gans, 1997; Olness, 1998; Perlmann & Waldinger, 1997; Rumbaut, 1997). Acculturation is defined as culture change that occurs through interactions of two or more distinct cultural systems with integrations, adaptations, and differentiation of beliefs and behaviors among the interacting groups (Clark & Hofsess, 1998; Gans, 1997). Assimilation is defined as the blending of a minority culture into the dominant culture until the minority culture no longer is identifiable as a separate culture (Alba & Nee, 1997; Gans, 1997; Rumbaut, 1997). Still others discuss a more finely nuanced process of acculturation through cultural retention (Gans, 1997; Kim, Kim, & Hurh, 1991) or cultural adaptation or adhesion (Brainard & Zaharlick, 1989; Hurh & Kim, 1984; Sung, 1997) whereby individuals actively resist assimilation and modify their use of the dominant culture's beliefs and behaviors to better fit their own traditional cultural ideology. Alternately, members of the minority culture may selectively choose beliefs and behaviors from each culture to make a mosaic or hybrid culture (Hurh & Kim, 1984).

Culture, at times, is treated as a tangible object available for manipulation, destruction, or preservation. Foner (1997), in contrast, asserts that there is "no such thing as a timeless tradition" (p. 963) to be recreated. Instead, versions of cultures, based on shared beliefs and behaviors are constructed and evolve as experiences are accumulated, evaluated, shared, and internalized (Foner, 1997; Gubrium & Holstein, 1999; Handwerker, 2002; Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998; Schwandt, 1994).

Intergenerational interactions through elder engagement provide fertile ground for exploring processes of culture building, culture maintenance, and culture regeneration. Intergenerational interactions remain vibrant and dynamic, unlike learning through formal education or studying artifacts in a museum, both of which may be static and rooted in a particular time (Heine, 2002). Culture is stretched and shaped both by intentional human agency (Schwandt, 1994) and in unintentional ways (Handwerker, 2002). The concept of "culture," though not a tangible artifact but an ephemeral, transient construct, then becomes something that can be created, regenerated, and preserved (Handwerker, 2002).

Culture, Self, and Family

Individuals move throughout life within a particular frame of reference defined by multiple social, cultural, physical, and historical structures and events. Unique pathways that individuals travel define and redefine self, goals, and possibilities and allow an individual to move through life assuming, modifying, or discarding various roles (Clausen, 1986; Dannefer & Uhlenberg, 1999). In traditional Khmer culture, for example, ideally old age was a time of leisure and was filled with visits to and from other elders or time in the Buddhist temple building merit for one's next life. Older people took on tasks that were less strenuous and less demanding such as tending small vegetable gardens or weaving. There was little expectation that elders provide economically for families. Elders provided advice and leadership to younger family members who increasingly provided for elders' day-to-day needs (Kato, 2000). The hierarchical ordering of intergenerational exchanges provided both young and old with a rhythm for life in Khmer society and a roadmap for understanding who one is in relation to another. A discussion by Phinney (2003) expands the concept of self-identity to include an ethnic identity or ethnic self. She argues that ethnic identity changes across time and within various contexts. A changing ethnic self identity involves retention of original cultural traits *and* adaptations of those traits to conform to dominant cultural forces. An ethnic identity is both internal and external because it involves recognition of a particular self (or person) who belongs to a group that is distinct from other groups of persons. Phinney (2003) also asserts that generation is less predictive of maintaining an ethnic self identity than language and friendship. An ethnic self identity can remain strong through participation in co-ethnic activities and by interactions with a co-ethnic community even when in close contact with mainstream society.

Clausen (1986) also describes identity as having a sense of self in relation to others. A sense of self informs one's methods of coping, the timing of life's events, and the continued influence of early socialization. In addition, as one moves through childhood and adolescence to adulthood, a shift may occur from assigned roles (e.g., as student or wage earner) to selected roles (e.g., as artist, lay monk, or volunteer) (Carstensen, 1992). Coping with events and circumstances different from established norms and routines involves adaptation and modification of strategies (Clausen, 1986). Khmer families often experienced massive trauma during the civil turmoil in Cambodia, their time in refugee camps, and as a consequence of resettlement in the United States (such as the marginalization and stigmatization previously described). Factors that influence the patterning of values will include traumatic experiences, age at time of migration, residential patterns in the host country, and length of time since migration (Detzner, 2004). Immigrant elders from Southeast Asia face the challenge of enculturating children and grandchildren in a

society that values individualism. Southeast Asian values, on the other hand, emphasize interdependence and interpersonal harmony (Phinney, Ong, & Madden, 2000). As Pyke's (2000) interviews with Korean- and Vietnamese-American young adults show, interpretations of appropriate roles and behaviors are modified to create cohesiveness in intergenerational relations. Young Korean- and Vietnamese-American adults valued independence and autonomy but also valued reciprocal caregiving and respect for aging parents (Pyke, 2000).

Each individual's life course takes shape through influences of culture and family, through demands made, and through shifting roles and statuses embraced or rejected (Clausen, 1986). A good illustration of this concept can be seen in Gelfand's (1989) research among 54 Salvadoran immigrants in the Washington, D.C. area. During interviews, Salvadoran immigrant elders revealed how their roles had shifted from possessing economic power within families toward providing non-material assistance. Elderly Salvadoran immigrants altered their roles to take advantage of their ability to provide advice, assist with childcare, and teach religion (Gelfand, 1989). Their selected role of provider was maintained but the assistance given was modified to optimize the elder's available resources of time and knowledge and compensate for the loss of financial power (Carstensen, 1992; Gelfand, 1989, 2003).

The self-concept discussed by Marcus and Herzog (1992) also considers adaptive processes. Adaptive processes allow an elder to define experiences unfamiliar in their new culture to fit within an acceptable cultural framework they have modified according to past and present events, beliefs, and behaviors. An adaptive self concept fits well within the Buddhist belief system held by most Khmers; one's joy or suffering are understood to be results of past and present practices. Adapting one's self image to "fit" within the new cultural milieu provides self-protection in stressful situations and enhances well-being. In addition, an adaptive self-concept explains how elders select environments that are age-friendly. For example, Khmer elders described in this dissertation continue connections with past practices by engaging in quieter weekday ceremonies and celebrations in the Buddhist temple in order to minimize their need to understand the high-tech gadgetry often found during weekend celebrations and ceremonies. Similarly, elders can optimize interactions that use relevant skills such as participating in preparations of traditional foods for community-wide celebrations, while minimizing effects of losses in other arenas (Marcus & Herzog, 1992). In this way, elders and their families are able to accommodate both stability and change in the face of cultural differences and remain connected to the past through slower-paced interactions. This is especially relevant for immigrant elders who are faced with significant role losses, such as no longer being a landholder or financial provider (Detzner, 1996; Lewis, 2001), but can compensate through sharing cultural knowledge

surrounding religious practices (Gelfand, 1989; Smith-Hefner, 1998) or healing traditions (Jenkins et al., 1996; Stephenson, 1995). For example, knowing that others experienced similar traumatic events provides a level of comfort to many Khmer elders and their families during Buddhist ceremonies and during meditation. Conversely, experiences of past traumatic events may intensify the need to engage in quiet meditative practices as a way of contextualizing one's suffering as part of a larger exchange of debt, repayment, and suffering that transcends lifetimes. Silence, ancestral remembrance, and introspection are centuries-old methods for expressing grief and suffering among many Khmer. Merit-building through participation in religious ceremonies and rituals serve to link the past and present. Introspection may provide ways for coping with remembrances of the past that may disturb present-day thoughts. A silent and introspective response is a culturally appropriate method for Khmers who have suffered extreme trauma and may not be a reflection of untreated pathology. In addition, linkages with others who experienced similar suffering provide mutual support mechanisms that allow families to engage in frequent ancestor ceremonies (attended by most members of the communities described in this dissertation) and may provide a safe environment within the community for expressing sorrow (Lewis, 2001).

Cultural Dissonance

Cultural dissonance, which includes cultural discontinuity (Smith-Hefner, 1999), cultural dislocation (Lewis, 2001; Smith-Hefner, 1999), role loss (Becker, 2002; Becker & Beyene, 1999; Detzner, 1996, 2004), and fragmentation (Detzner, 1996; Portes, 1997) are but a few of the challenges immigrant elders and their families must face as they navigate new territory within unfamiliar societies. Cultural dissonance often occurs when elders attempt to teach younger immigrants traditional cultural values, beliefs and behaviors while residing in a society notably different from their homeland society (Gelfand, 1979; Kaplan, Henkin, & Kusano, 2002; Lewis, 2001). Younger cohorts may view traditional cultural beliefs and behaviors as no longer relevant in their "new" society. Traditional cultural values and notions of American independence, however, influence ways by which both younger and older immigrants negotiate changing identities, responsibilities and understandings as well as manifestations of behaviors surrounding traditional intergenerational relations.

An Historical Context for Practicing Filial Piety in Southeast Asia

Filial Piety and Elder Reverence

Southeast Asia is made up of many different ethnic groups who share some fundamental beliefs but may interpret them in remarkably different ways. One fundamental aspect of

Southeast Asian beliefs is an adherence to filial piety and elder reverence (Cuong, Ahn, Goodkind, Knodel, & Friedman, 2000; Kato, 2000; Kim, Liang, Rhee, & Kim, 1996; Knodel, Chayovan, Graisurapong, & Suraratdecha, 2000; Ledgerwood, 1995; Metha, Osman, & Lee E.Y., 1995; Natividad, 2000; Thang, 1998; Thang, 2002). Filial piety may be manifest in diverse ways throughout societies. Elders may be viewed as providers of religious education through exemplary behavior and storytelling. They may engage in multi-generational interactions to provide moral education, emotional support, security, and a sense of belongingness or other non-tangible benefits that can assume a higher priority than tangible benefits such as income (Kato, 2000; Thang, 2002).

Patterns of care in Cambodia reflect long held beliefs of ancestor veneration and filial piety. The pervasiveness of poverty throughout Cambodia, however, including the lack of a social security system and a badly battered health care system (consequences of the wars and civil unrest of the past several decades) have created extremely difficult circumstances for Cambodian elders who must grapple with changing roles within fractured families and communities (Chandler, 1996, 2000; Kamm, 1998; Kato, 2000). It is predicted that changes brought about by industrialization, war, or civil disruption will lead to weakened family ties and reduce care given to elders by family members (Cuong et al., 2000; Domingo & Asis, 1995; Kato, 2000; Kim et al., 1996; Knodel et al., 2000; Knodel, Saengtienchai, & Sittitrai, 1995; Metha et al., 1995; Phillips, 2000).

Throughout Southeast Asia, migration, urbanization, and changes in female participation in the labor force have brought about changes in family and household structure. Wars and civil strife have added to the plight of families through loss of family members and relocation (Chandler, 1996, 2000; Kamm, 1998). One of the most salient changes is in residential patterns or living arrangements of elders. Even with a shift away from co-residence with an adult child, elders usually are not being deprived of care, comfort and support from their families (Domingo & Asis, 1995; Kato, 2000).

Many families across Southeast Asia maintain a near-constant sense of awareness of the debt one owes for some benefit one person has bestowed upon another, with the debt of gratitude owed to parents being especially strong (Cuong et al., 2000; Domingo & Asis, 1995; Kato, 2000; Knodel et al., 2000; Knodel et al., 1995; Metha et al., 1995; Zimmer & Kim, 2002). Southeast Asian adult children understand that the care they give their elderly parents is a repayment for their own births and upbringing. Indeed, Domingo and Asis (1995) document several variants of elder care among a group of Filipino families, from the traditional "ideal" of co-residence with an adult child to the reluctant willingness of elders to continue independent living, a pattern often

based on children's needs and health. Families' economic resources are frequently spread across an array of kin or domestic networks whether multi-generational families live in under the same roof or whether elders live independently (Domingo & Asis, 1995). In spite of changes and predictions, traditional patterns of care, reverence, obedience and a sense of moral obligation permeate the lives of Southeast Asian elders and families (Cuong et al., 2000; Kato, 2000; Knodel & Saengtienchai, 1999; Metha et al., 1995; Phillips, 2000; Thang, 2002; Zimmer & Kim, 2002).

Living Arrangements in Southeast Asia

Filial piety often is manifest in living arrangements, particularly multi-generational households. There is a strong normative expectation that children will provide support for aging parents and grandparents (Cuong et al., 2000; Kato, 2000; Knodel & Saengtienchai, 1999; Metha et al., 1995; Phillips, 2000; Thang, 2002; Zimmer & Kim, 2002). Multiple factors can create changes in appropriate models for multi-generational households. Knodel and Saengtienchai (1999) find that discussions of living arrangements and support among Thai families are emotion laden especially when the level of support that is expected is not being provided. Most often poverty and relationship strains prevent the fulfillment of Southeast Asian elders' expectations of receiving assistance from their children (Cuong et al., 2000; Hugo, 2000; Kato, 2000; Knodel & Saengtienchai, 1999; Natividad, 2000; Zimmer & Kim, 2002). In spite of a traditionally mediated preference for living with a daughter, Thai and Khmer elders, for example, are more likely to live with a separated or divorced child regardless of the child's gender. Modifications to traditional living arrangements often are a reflection of the economic needs of the child and a continuation of reciprocal support between elders and children (Kato, 2000; Knodel & Saengtienchai, 1999; Zimmer & Kim, 2002). Exploring intergenerational support exchanges in the form of multigenerational households reveals several interesting difficulties. For example, defining residential patterns as either co-residential or living alone (dichotomous variables) loses sight of the continuum of possibilities for intergenerational assistance (Knodel & Saengtienchai, 1999).

The definition of household as a group of persons who "live and eat together" fails to recognize the ways many families adapt their homes to provide a better "fit" for family members across generations. A description of living arrangements based solely on household composition obscures the complexity and extent of intertwining of various network systems (Cuong et al., 2000; Hugo, 2000; Knodel & Saengtienchai, 1999; Natividad, 2000; Zimmer & Kim, 2002) such as grandparents living with grandchildren, separate quarters connected by verandas, or dwellings clustered around a garden.

Children who live far from their parents or grandparents also may contribute to elders' living arrangements through financial remittances or periodic visits (Kato, 2000; Zimmer & Kim,

2002). Even infrequent visits may be used to reinforce or reflect notions of kin obligation as moral duty (Durkheim, 1893/1984). Another pattern of living arrangements may be the intricate social contact with neighboring dwellings of children or other kin (Knodel & Saengtienchai, 1999). In addition, Knodel and Saengtienchai (1999) demonstrate that more distant children also play important roles in the long term care of elders through material assistance and remittances from afar. Adult children who live and work in urban areas may be better able to provide rural dwelling elders with more options in the types and amount of care available. Migratory children's possible familiarity with more sophisticated health care facilities in urban areas may benefit elders who become ill (Kato, 2000; Knodel & Saengtienchai, 1999; Zimmer & Kim, 2002).

Living arrangements often are intergenerational exchanges rather than one-way benefits to the elderly. Exchanges often are temporal (i.e. first the elder provides material and non-material assistance to the young family in the form of land, housing, or labor). There may be a shift in the exchange toward members of the young family providing non-material assistance to elders as elders become less able to provide labor (Kato, 2000; Knodel & Saengtienchai, 1999; Metha et al., 1995; Phillips, 2000; Thang, 2002; Zimmer & Kim, 2002). Supportive behaviors such as described above may reflect positive solidarity whereby elders receive support from persons who share a common set of beliefs *and* who fulfill different functions in elders' lives (Durkheim, 1893/1984, 1984; Fingerman & Hay, 2004).

Many Cambodian elders, for example, continue to work and increasingly rely on their youngest daughter for care (Kato, 2000; Zimmer & Kim, 2002). Such intergenerational care is generally reciprocal. Elders cook, clean, gather fire wood, or watch over children while the children's mother works for wages (Kato, 2000). Elders in Cambodia agree that younger family members are not able to provide the care that is traditionally expected. On the other hand, younger Cambodian adults insist that elders are valuable members of society and that providing care is a moral obligation that they freely embrace. Recognition of elders' importance; however, may not always reflect actual patterns of care in Cambodia (Kato, 2000).

It is clear that elders are not being abandoned even with broad changes in Southeast Asian societies and shifting patterns of residence (Kato, 2000; Knodel et al., 2000; Zimmer & Kim, 2002). The direction and balance of the flow of support reflects the importance Southeast Asian people ascribe to notions of respect, obedience, and faithfulness. Support first flows from parent to child, then it is bi-directional and, as the parent nears the end of the life cycle, support flows from child to parent. These patterns, although consisting of an array of different living arrangements, reflect the strong interdependence within family relationships and the continued influence of traditions of filial piety. Even within exchanges that appear to be predominately one-

way, the flow of affective and symbolic exchanges may continue as circular caregiving within in the exchange relationship.

Caregiving

Caregiving practices and preferences for Southeast Asian elders, most of which occur in family homes, greatly varies. It becomes important to step back from a discussion of care provision to consider a multi-tiered analysis of macro socioeconomic systems, health care systems, and micro-level household health producing behaviors to define the household production of health as:

A dynamic behavioral process through which households combine their (internal) knowledge, resources, and behavioral norms and patterns with available (external) technologies, services, information, and skills to restore, maintain, and promote the health of their members (Berman, Kendall, & Bhattacharyya, 1994, p. 207).

This definition is helpful because it addresses both the internal and external forces that influence beliefs and behaviors associated with filial piety. Further expanding the definition offered by Berman et al. (1994), filial piety is reflected in care through the household, no matter whether the household consists of a nuclear or an extended family. The production of health is based on “specific patterns of production, consumption, reproduction, and social relations and their relevance to particular health problems and behaviors” (Berman et al., 1994, p. 208). The recognition by Berman and his colleagues (1994) that “health-producing behaviors are not necessarily done with explicit links to health in mind”(p. 208) is also of particular salience when considering care giving and care receiving practices that are family-centered.

Caregiving and Gender

Throughout Southeast Asia, health is a family responsibility. Caregiving is unequally distributed across genders with daughters and daughters-in-law most often assuming the role of primary caregiver (Kato, 2000; Zimmer & Kim, 2002). Daughters and the youngest children (especially before a child's marriage) are preferred care providers for many Southeast Asian elders due to a widespread perception throughout the area that these children are emotionally closer to parents and are, therefore, more dependable (Kato, 2000; Knodel et al., 1995; Zimmer & Kim, 2002). Conversely, caregiving among some groups tends to follow gendered understandings of "appropriate" interactions regardless of birth order (Metha et al., 1995). Physical care involving intimacy, if a spouse is unavailable, may be segregated into male-male and female-female interactions. However, other activities such as trips to physicians, the market, or escorting grandchildren to and from school may be assigned to whoever is available (Metha et

al., 1995). In Singapore, for example, in spite of preferences among Malay elders for daughters to provide care and the preference for daughters-in-law as caregivers among Indian and Chinese elders, availability of the caregiver is the primary deciding factor among most elders regardless of ethnic identity. In addition, societal changes, such as the existence of fractured families in Cambodia that resulted from years of war and civil turmoil (Kato, 2000; Zimmer & Kim, 2002), creates an emerging phenomenon of grandchildren living with elderly grandparents while parents migrate in search of work or when parents become ill and unable to work (Kato, 2000; Knodel et al., 1995; Zimmer & Kim, 2002). The availability of an "appropriate" caregiver is also linked to family size and religious upbringing (Metha et al., 1995; Natividad, 2000).

Patterns such as described above can be found throughout Southeast Asia. The foundations for filial piety are strong throughout the region. Then again, such foundations are not static. Directional exchanges may shift within a single configuration of social and family networks. Notions of obligation, respect, and faithfulness may become reshaped and redefined with changing circumstances. Although changes across Southeast Asia are reflected in shifts in patterns surrounding filial piety and family exchanges, the disruption caused by fleeing one's homeland creates a remarkably different set of tensions. The preceding review of practices, in Southeast Asia in general and mainland Southeast Asia in particular, will help in our understanding of Southeast Asian refugees' family life and intergenerational exchanges in the United States within the context of a dramatically different culture.

Filial Piety in the United States

Refugees have faced massive cultural dissonance and social change. Their experiences require exploration and analysis in order to understand how history reshapes traditional intergenerational exchanges, how intergenerational exchanges function, and how and in what ways traditional intergenerational exchanges transcend social and cultural changes within the context of life in the United States (Hareven & Adams, 1996). Experiences of aging refugees and other immigrants have been shown to be significantly different from elders and their families who have not participated in forced international migration (Detzner, 2004; Ikels, 1998; Villa, 1998). In the following section, I explore ways that changing social and cultural life circumstances are inscribed upon the experiences of elders and their families and how social and cultural disruption influence underlying foundations for traditional intergenerational exchanges.

Intergenerational Exchanges and Changing Life Circumstances

Widespread war in Cambodia and Vietnam in the 1970s led to a mass exodus from those countries and disrupted family, community, and religion, the three institutions that defined family

members' roles and intergenerational obligations (Kato, 2000). It is within this context of disruption and forced change *in medias res* that most mainland Southeast Asian immigrant families arrived in the United States (Detzner, 2004).

Similar to other refugees from around the world who faced social and cultural disruption (Becker, 2002; Chester & Holtan, 1992; Conquergood, 1992; Daniel & Knudsen, 1995; Muecke, 1995), most Southeast Asian refugees who arrived in the United States had experienced life in crowded refugee camps and family disruption at a time when many older adults were expecting to assume roles of respected elders, leaders, and sages based on lifetime accumulations of economic and sociocultural capital (Detzner, 1996, 2004; Lewis, 2001; Smith-Hefner, 1998). Prior to life in refugee camps and immigration in the mid-1970s to mid-1980s, middle-aged and young adult refugees had received family and religious teachings surrounding moral obligations of respect and providing care for elders. Having lost accumulated resources (material, educational, etc.), elders and middle-aged refugees strained to reestablish themselves as economic providers and were unable to give the care and reverence elders expected (Lewis, 2001; Smith-Hefner, 1999; Yee, 1997). Children of refugees at the time of escape and immigration, many of whom are now adults, struggle to find ways to fulfill traditional familial obligations while fulfilling work and educational expectations of mainstream American society (Detzner, 2004; Pyke, 2000; Smith-Hefner, 1998; Smith-Hefner, 1999; Yee, 1997). Grandchildren of refugees, most of who were born in the United States, face highly conflicting images of traditional respect, obedience, and care for elders and an American ideology of independence and autonomy (Foner, 1997; Portes, 1996; Pyke, 2000).

Various pressures on both young and old, such as described above, can change the structure of intergenerational relationships to create uncertainty and conflict, even where there is considerable intergenerational solidarity (Hareven & Adams, 1996; Lüscher & Pillemer, 1998). Such ambivalence may change how intergenerational exchanges function, and how resources, such as time, housing, food, care, or financial assets, are managed and allocated across the generations. For example, the desire to fulfill family obligations may be overshadowed by circumstances associated with social and cultural disruption such as family separations (Detzner, 1996, 2004; Horowitz, 1998) or loss of economic power (Boehnlein et al., 1995; Hareven & Adams, 1996). Ambiguity surrounding lost family members (Boss, 2002), loss of status (Gelfand, 1989; Kim et al., 1991), and concerns over loss of cultural traditions (Detzner, 1996), including loss of language, can strain intergenerational relations. In addition, through deaths or separation, families have become fragmented and are unable to fulfill expected roles for each member (Detzner, 1996; Gelfand, 1989; Kim et al., 1991).

Differences in attitudes toward “appropriate” intergenerational exchanges, including obligations for care, exist within both immigrant and non-immigrant families (Phinney et al., 2000). However, Phinney and colleagues (2000) report that differences are more disruptive for immigrant families who are struggling with changing life circumstances such as role loss, economic loss, or loss of extended social and family networks (Detzner, 2004). In spite of the above mentioned conflicts and disruptions within immigrant families, Foner (1997) describes ways immigrant families “fuse together the old and new to create a new kind of family life” (p. 961) that seeks to modify fulfillment of familial obligations in accordance with necessary changes such as additional time away from family for work or school. Foner’s (1997) ethnographic study of Jamaican immigrants in New York, for example, revealed creative “culture-building” (p. 961). Jamaican immigrants were not like other Americans nor were they like Jamaicans who remained in Jamaica; instead, they had constructed a different meaning for being “Jamaican” in the United States. Similarly, Hurh and Kim (1984), using 1980 U. S. Census data, structured interviews, open-ended questions, and questionnaires, posit that immigrants selectively choose to incorporate U. S. cultural norms and behaviors that fit within a traditional framework of intergenerational relations, rather than discarding traditional norms and behaviors and assimilating, or fully adopting U. S. norms and behaviors.

Kim and colleagues (1991), as a way to illustrate cultural adhesion, provide a review of relevant literature to describe ways Korean immigrants have modified intergenerational relations to “fit” changing life circumstances. For example, they found that elderly Korean couples were more likely to live separately from their adult children as a way to adjust to a lost role as head of household while holding onto the role of sage or loving grandparent. Adult children, however, strongly objected to elderly parents’ moves away from co-residence because of an implicit understanding among Korean immigrant families that maintaining separate residences was associated with diminished filial piety.

Another way of accommodating changing family needs and responsibilities while fulfilling obligations for care is an extended definition of family to include non-kin (Allen, Blieszner, & Roberto, 2000; Detzner, 1996; Foner, 1997; Horowitz, 1998; Kibria, 1999; Mac Rae, 1992). When traditional family and kin ties are severed, as is often the case with refugee families, a modified form of “family” may be constructed (Riley & Riley, 1996) that includes both kin and non-kin (Mac Rae, 1992). Although there may actually be fewer family members, in a traditional or biological sense, the newly constructed family may, in fact, be larger in number. There may be fewer ascribed roles with more people fulfilling different roles according to changing needs. Riley and Riley (1996) describe families without boundaries set by

“generation, age or geography” (p. 287) as a “latent web of continually shifting linkages” (p. 283). Linkages with the latent matrix family form described by Riley and Riley (1996) are made by choice and stand ready to assist when needed.

Kim (1999) describes ways in which elderly Korean immigrants create kin-like attachments with other elderly Korean immigrants to reduce the loneliness and isolation that might otherwise result when they are left alone while younger family members are away at work. Detzner (1996), who describes Southeast Asian immigrant families using a typology characterized by ways of coping with losses secondary to wars and civil conflict in Southeast Asia, found that even the most conflict-filled families continued at least some vestiges of traditional family practice as part of everyday life by establishing extended kin and kin-like relationships with other co-ethnic people.

The establishment of kin and kin-like relationships supports the widespread belief that Southeast Asian peoples give priority to collective consciousness and social solidarity (Durkheim, 1893/1984; Kato, 2000; Knodel & Saengtienchai, 1999). The constitution of kinship and assumption of kin-obligations influence understandings of responsibilities associated with intergenerational interactions (Allen et al., 2000; Riley & Riley, 1996). Close associations and emotional attachments, agreement over “proper” relationships across generations, reciprocal support, recognition and fulfillment of obligations, and maintenance of interactive opportunities characterize intergenerational exchanges and point to ways immigrants have modified and adapted to changing life circumstance.

Rethinking and Reorganizing Family

Once in the United States, Southeast Asian immigrants and refugees often must reorganize their lives (Becker & Beyene, 1999; Detzner, 2004). There is little doubt that refugees and immigrants face considerable pressure to adopt the norms and behaviors of the United States (Alba & Nee, 1997; Foner, 1997; Rumbaut, 1997; Smith-Hefner, 1999). For example, Khmer elders lost significant aspects of their lives and identities (such as positions within extended families and land ownership) when they fled Cambodia (Becker & Beyene, 1999). In addition, they are shown to be subject to constant adjustment. Narratives collected by Becker and Beyene (1999) of Khmer elders who live in an urban inner city reveal that many elders experience chronic illnesses, are isolated, lonely, and easily upset. Moreover, Khmer elders may occupy a liminal position whereby they are “suspended in social space,” outside the boundaries of society where they have been “declassified” in their old status and not yet “reclassified” in their new (lower) status (Becker & Beyene, 1999, p. 299). Khmer elders, with their ethnic values firmly

rooted in pre-migration Cambodia, often describe how they were prepared for a different elder life with dramatically different roles.

Cultural definitions Khmer hold of "old age" also are explored by Becker and Beyene (1999). They found that a chronological age of 40 years was the introduction to old age as grandchildren began to appear and more time was spent in the temple. They also found dual meanings to old age. On the one hand, old age is revered in accordance with traditional cultural ideology. On the other hand, old age is seen as non-productive, a pattern that may represent an adoption of American values. Becker and Beyene (1999) report that Khmer elders also experience a lowering of their status as younger Khmers adopt American ideals such as equality for all ages. Khmer elders, most of whom do not speak English, find it difficult to communicate with younger Khmers who may not speak Khmer. Becker and Beyene (1999) argue that elders often become invisible within their own families.

Limited resources, which are not unusual circumstances for refugees, constrain elders' ability to command respect. However, there are considerable gender differences in elders' experiences because of types of resources held and valued by elderly men and women. Elder women are more able to maintain their status (albeit already lower than men's status) through their roles as "grandmothers" and care-providers; their chief resources are time and knowledge of care practices, resources that transcend the refugee experience. Elder men, conversely, have fewer opportunities to engage in traditional late life activities such as participating as temple and community leaders because they often are isolated within families who live in ethnically diverse urban areas, many have not been employed since their arrival in the U.S, and they lack financial resources or other accumulated property (Becker & Beyene, 1999; Detzner, 2004). Yet, there is agreement among Khmer elders who compare life in the U. S with life in Cambodia; life in the United States is remarkably better for elders. Khmer elders cite increased availability of medical care and Supplemental Security Income; both of which lead to decreased dependency on family networks.

Based on Southeast Asian elders' experiences surviving the horrors of war, escape and resettlement, Detzner (1996, 2004) argues that Southeast Asian elders and their families can be categorized according to family types. Detzner places grandparents, who are highly revered in Southeast Asian culture, within four major types: separated, conflicted, lost, and resilient. Elders and other family members may be part of "separated families" (Detzner, 1996, p. 45) who lost each other during war and resettlement and are unable to fulfill expected roles for each member because of generational absences. Elders may also be part of "conflicted families" whereby family members disagree on who should be fulfilling particular roles such as who should

intervene when children rebel and defy their grandparents or parents' wishes. Overwhelming losses are a common occurrence among Southeast Asian elders who lived through war in Cambodia, Laos, or Vietnam. The loss of family members and lost positions within the hierarchy of family can strain family relations. Often elders within these “lost families” (Detzner, 1996, p. 46) are involuntarily displaced as family heads and as economic providers by younger family members. Detzner (1996) also describes “resilient families” who have life histories filled with “flexibility, hardiness and tenacity in the face of major obstacles” (p. 46).

Inherent in this typology is a struggle between modernity and tradition (Detzner, 1996) that may radically change intergenerational relations and notions of filial piety (Smith-Hefner, 1998, 1999). Individuals who have lived longer in the sending culture are more dependent and are more likely to internalize beliefs and behaviors surrounding filial piety (Gelfand, 2003). They are more likely to rely on “mutual, informal, and recurrent” (Hareven & Adams, 1996, p. 6) assistance across generations. Immigrant groups often strive to retain ethnic identity and sociocultural roles while assimilating socially, economically, and culturally (Gans, 1997).

Gans (1997) questions, however, whether researchers may incorrectly assume a dichotomous relationship between assimilation and retention rather than a range of adaptations to life in different environments. He (1997) asserts that researchers must begin with what older immigrants know and what beliefs and behaviors associated with both cultures second and third generation immigrants are willing to accept. Second generation immigrants’ aspirations, moreover, may not match the aspirations of preceding generations in spite of intentions to fulfill familial obligations (Alba & Nee, 1997; Foner, 1997; Perlmann & Waldinger, 1997; Portes, 1996, 1997). Filial piety may be combined with independence across generations of refugees and immigrants (Chun & Akutsu, 2003). Tensions may develop as families renegotiate “appropriate” patterns for fulfilling obligations. Refugees and immigrants are not victims of acculturation but continually reconstitute and reinvent their ethnic and cultural identities (Gans, 1997; Lewis, 2001).

Shifting Roles

Ethnic Identity

The horrors of war, escape experiences, life in crowded refugee camps and family disruption characterize the experiences of many mainland Southeast Asian immigrants to the United States (Detzner, 1996; Lewis, 2001). Yee (1997) offers four case studies that demonstrate both positive and negative adaptations by families as a result of changing life circumstances. In each, fleeing the effects of war and civil unrest in Southeast Asia caused disruptions in elders’

and their families lives (Szymusiak, 1999; Ung, 2000). Some elders experienced role shifts such as head of household to housekeeper or lost the role of grandparent because of deaths or separations of other family members (Yee, 1997).

Family obligations may be overwhelmed by the circumstances of any of the aforementioned disruptions (Gelfand, 2003; Ung, 2000). Southeast Asian elders experience a loss of identity through their loss of place within "the web of family, culture, and history" (Detzner, 1996, p. 45). Changes in elders' sense of identity can create multiple problems throughout families as each generation struggles to find balance between traditions of filial piety associated with Southeast Asian cultures and traditions of independence found in American mainstream cultural ideologies (Phinney, 2003; Smith-Hefner, 1999).

Southeast Asian elders and their families may be subjected to multiple jeopardies: minority status, limited English language skills, limited job skills, and age (Deppen-Wood, Luborsky, & Scheer, 1997; Sokolovsky, 1997a). Multiple jeopardies intensify problems associated with growing old. Conversely, ethnicity may provide a protective environment for elders (Sokolovsky, 1997b). Sokolovsky (1997a) argues that elders may be rewarded through "ethnic compensation" (p. 255) with ethnicity as a positive reinforcement for well-being (Sokolovsky, 1997c). Ethnic elders may accrue benefits from remaining attached to ethnic identities and life within ethnic subcultures (Sokolovsky, 1997a). Phinney (2003) asserts that ethnic identity can remain strong across generations even with considerable mainstream cultural engagement.

Reciprocity

Traditional concepts of intergenerational exchanges embrace a continual spiral of reciprocal caregiving and care-receiving across generations. Traditional beliefs and behaviors surrounding intergenerational relations within Southeast Asian societies give shape to the framework of hierarchically organized relations of obedience and respect younger members show to older members of societies. Traditional intergenerational beliefs and behaviors also mold ways in which emotions, faithfulness, and love within and across generations are interpreted (Domingo & Asis, 1995; Ikels, 1997; Jenike, 1997a, 1997b; Kaplan & Thang, 2002; van Willigen & Lewis, In press). For example, Pyke's (2000) interviews with Korean- and Vietnamese-American college students demonstrates how a "normal American family" was used to interpret both an American "ideal" family characterized as white with affectionate exchanges, autonomy, and independence and an Asian "model minority" ideal of adherence to traditional intergenerational relations through respect and reciprocal care across all ages, but, especially to elders.

Southeast Asian elders have been described as “the well spring of cultural experiences” (Truyen, 1998, p. 64) who guard the morality and traditions of the community. Elders pass on traditional knowledge by engaging in “dialogue with young people” (Truyen, 1998, p. 66-67) and are catalysts for the continuation or revival of social or cultural traditions. Elders may lead the way in reconstruction of cultural infrastructures (Truyen, 1998). They are said to preserve the “emotional link between recollection and transgenerational inner reality” as they promote family continuity (Liem, 1998, p. 75). Intergenerational interactions further provide a platform for building a more caring society through mutual respect and increased civility (Gush, 2002; Henkin & Butts, 2002).

Collective Memory

Intergenerational relationships enlighten and re-educate both the elder and the younger audience in spiraling, self-sustaining, and self-renewing patterns of voices and actions stretching simultaneously across histories, through present circumstances and into futures (Gubrium & Holstein, 1999; Schwandt, 1994). Culture building generates a way to understand, create, and interpret events that have given shape to lived experiences.

A collective memory within societies informs people about who they are and how they should interact with each other. Such a collective memory is formed, reconstituted, and recalled when external stimuli triggered by others’ utterances or recollections bring one’s own memories to the surface (Halbwachs, 1952/1992). When lessons are presented within an indigenous culture then those lessons are supported by the collective memory intrinsic to a particular society (Handwerker, 2002). Immigrant elders face additional challenges when they attempt to teach traditional practices away from the indigenous society and often must find ways to redefine their own roles to fit changing circumstances in the new society. The contributions and importance of elders can be illustrated through the following cross-cultural review of elders’ roles as agents in culture building.

Elders on the Marshall Islands teach younger islanders cultural traditions by providing day-to-day mentoring relating to indigenous crafts, navigation techniques, and healing arts (Heine, 2002). Similarly, in South Africa, elders transmit cultural values to younger members of society through oral traditions that promote cultural continuity and reinforce cultural identities (Gush, 2002). Hawaiian elders are known as “conveyors of culture” because they have the greatest level of knowledge and experience in all aspects of “traditional” life (Kaplan et al., 2002, p. 8). As a consequence, Hawaiian elders created a cultural immersion program for children that was designed to re-connect generations through festivals, workshops, conferences, and other organized activities (Kaplan et al., 2002; Kaplan & Lapilio III, 2002). In New Zealand, the Maori

concept of “retirement” is very different from retirement in western societies. Instead of reducing activities as they age, Maori elders take on additional cultural responsibilities because of an acknowledgement of their experience and wisdom (Kaplan et al., 2002). In each of these examples, elders have accepted and embraced their socially ascribed roles as teachers of the young and as transmitters of culture. Elders in the Marshall Islands, South Africa, Hawaii and New Zealand, though not isolated from outside influence, are able to fulfill roles that are acknowledged as valuable by the society in which they are located. Immigrant elders do not have that advantage and face multiple obstacles as they struggle to full their roles as links to cultural traditions from societies they left behind. One way they are responding to multiple jeopardies and obstacles is through a reconfiguration to care networks.

Informal Care Networks

Informal care networks are characterized as social support systems that include interpersonal relationships and social ties (Burton, Kasper, Shore, Cagney, LaVeist, Cubbin, & German, 1995), but are not organized by explicit sets of rules or hierarchies dictating who should provide care. Informal caregiving systems are often thought to mirror social networks that exist prior to the need for assistance. Researchers suggest that informal care networks result from a lifetime accumulation of exchanges and interactions (Stoller & Pugliesi, 1988), a process that may limit network composition among immigrants and refugees (Ong, 2003). As such, informal care systems change over time to reflect the level of assistance and care needed (Stoller & Cutler, 1993; Stoller & Pugliesi, 1988). Neighbors, friends (Kim, 1999; Moon, 1996), or others who are considered “like” kin (Mac Rae, 1992) also may be included in many informal networks.

Most research on informal care networks has focused primarily on white elders (Stoller & Cutler, 1992). Composition of informal care networks has been shown to vary, however, among those studies that include other ethnicities or races (Braun et al., 1996; Burton et al., 1995; Detzner, 1996; Kauh, 1997). Kauh (1997) indicates, for example, that elder Korean Americans tend to rely almost exclusively on family members for informal care. Burton et al. (1995) find that informal care networks among African American elders differ from white elders’ networks in composition but not size. What is more, they (Burton et al., 1995) show that African American elders’ informal care networks often contain significant numbers of non-kin. The limited information available on minority elders’ health networks indicates a need to recognize the heterogeneity of aging populations in the United States and include studies of non-white informal care networks.

Social connectivity and support created through informal networks allow predictability, stability, and a heightened sense of self-worth (Cohen & Willis, 1985; Fitchen, 1991; Scheidt &

Norris-Baker, 1993). Connections with community members encourage reciprocal relations across time and space (Casarett, 1991; Flora & Flora, 1996; Scott, 1998) and facilitate aging refugees' and their families' perceptions of belonging and "insidedness" (Rowles, 1988) as members of a caring network. Social capital, with its inherent mutual trust and reciprocity (Flora & Flora, 1996), its "neighborliness" (Casarett, 1991, p. 244), and insidedness, may provide refugee families with significant benefits through connections with mono-ethnic communities (Becker, 2003). Social capital promotes a willingness for community members to act in partnership to produce an environment that is more likely to have the capacity to produce and sustain healthy individuals across the life span (Easterling, Gallagher, Drisko, & Johnson, 1998; Weech-Maldonado & Merrill, 2000). Social networks and space, both physical and psychological, are inseparable and may provide a sense of safety, as in the belongingness described by Rowles (1988), Casaret (1991), and others or a sense of insecurity such as described by Becker (2003) or Smith-Hefner (1999) in their studies of immigrant families. In the following paragraphs, I explore various factors in addition to kinship that are likely to influence informal networks constructed by refugee families.

Proximity-Based Informal Care Networks

Informal networks often operate beyond boundaries established by kin or proximity (Barnes 1954). Informal care networks also link people together according to proximity and relationships (Barnes, 1954). For example, Stoller and Pugliesi (1988) show that elderly people form close relationships with other kin or with non-kin when their children do not live nearby, a finding similar to that among Norwegian fishermen who live in close proximity to each other but are not kin (Barnes 1954). Yet, even distant kin may also contribute to informal care networks through financial contributions or periodic visits (Moon, 1996) thus reinforcing or reflecting notions of kin obligation as moral duty (Durkheim, 1893/1984) or what Hareven and Adams (1996) call "intimacy from a distance" (p. 9). Moreover, such supportive behavior may also reflect Durkheim's idea of positive solidarity whereby informal care networks are comprised of persons who share a common set of beliefs *and* who fulfill different functions.

Informal Care Networks and Gender

In addition to kin and proximity, gender may also be an important factor to consider when examining informal care network composition (Allen et al., 2000). Men and women in the United States bring distinct roles to caregiving (Smith-Hefner, 1999; Stoller & Cutler, 1992; Yee, 1997). Different structural barriers can hinder caregivers' fulfillment of their caregiving roles. For example, sex-segregated tasks and responsibilities characterize traditional understandings of

the division of labor in a household (Durkheim, 1893/1984). Women may continue to be responsible for household tasks, even in the face of advanced frailty or roles as primary wage earners, while men are expected to “help” rather than assume primary responsibility. Furthermore, within a tradition of sex-segregated division of labor, a problematic assumption that women are “natural” suppliers of household and caregiving support (Yanagisako & Collier, 1987) may place a significant burden on an already-frail elderly woman or a woman who spends significant time away from the household while earning wages. Women retain the status of caregiver, based purely on erroneous assumptions of natural affinities, even when they are the ones in need of care or are responsible for the family’s financial security.

Fictive-Kin-Based Informal Care Networks

The concept of “family” often connotes ties between persons with a consanguineous connection, thus complementing arguments regarding women’s “natural” affinity for caregiving (Collier & Yanagisako, 1987). Mac Rae’s (1992) concept of “fictive” kin, however, includes relationships made through “working arrangements” (Van Velsen, 1967, p. 141-142) in social interactions that result from choices people make regarding alternative social norms.

Mac Rae (1992) argues that often it is researchers who define who is and who is not kin because they fail to look beyond boundaries of mainstream American definitions of family. It becomes important that notions of who is and is not “kin” be disentangled from biology. The significance of fictive kin is unclear because this important segment of informal care networks for elders has received little empirical research. Many elders report, however, that sharing some traumatic experience strengthens ties with non-kin and that fictive kin relations are long and durable—an important concept when considering refugees’ experiences with traumatic events. Although proximity is an important component of fictive kin networks, such connections can also reach across great distances (Hareven & Adams, 1996). Long distant networks do not easily fit within the various categories offered by Barnes (1954) (i.e., kin, territorial, or industrial) or by Durkheim (1893/1984) (i.e., reflecting mechanical or organic solidarity depending upon the complexity of the society).

An expanded explanation for “fictive” kin should include Mayer’s (1966) presentation of “quasi-groups” (p. 110) or “kindred of co-operation” (p. 117) and Riley and Riley’s (1996) description of a latent matrix family structure. Mayer (1966) describes quasi-groups and kindred of co-operation as comprised of individuals who form relationships to fulfill a specific purpose, such as temporary care after an illness. The reorganized and recreated family or kin-like network described by Riley and Riley (1996) lend further support for considering broadened linkages. They (Riley & Riley, 1996) argue that new forms of bonds may occur as families face difficulties

such as separation, fragmentation, or reconfiguration due to remarriage, adoption, or “surrogate” kin (p. 287), but with the important distinction that fictive kin networks are long-lasting entities and do not fragment once the particular transaction is complete. Bonds such as these form a fluid matrix of relationships (Riley & Riley, 1996). Riley and Riley’s (1996) description of a latent matrix and Mayer’s narrative of quasi-group or kindred of cooperation, extend an understanding of care networks to include persons who are linked through their common interest in mutual well-being.

The constitution of kinship and assumption of kin-obligations influence understandings of informal care networks: who is responsible for whom and under what circumstances. The notion that each individual is limited to a defined role and status within a kin-based system often contradicts the reality of elders’ lived experiences (Hareven & Adams, 1996). Van Velsen (1967) highlights the dangers of assuming homogeneity across roles and stability within social or cultural interactions without empirically considering the situation in which such actions occur. Role conflict, Van Velsen (1967) argues, has been ignored by limiting one’s theoretical perspective to an analysis of structure without analyzing the situation wherein one acts no matter how networks are situated within kin relations, within relations based on proximity, or within relations between individuals with kin-like relations.

Networks and Ethnic Enclaves

Ethnic minorities, especially ethnic minority elders, may be socially isolated with few chances to interact with others in U.S. mainstream society (Gelfand, 2003). In long-term ethnographic studies of Chinese elders living in the Boston area, Ikels (1986) found that many elders spoke no English, did not attend school and were not likely to be employed, three factors that, if practiced, mitigate for a more positive life experience for immigrants of all ages. In the face of isolation from mainstream U.S. culture, living in ethnically homogenous communities provided ways for many to continue roles associated with cultural maintenance through traditional familial residential patterns and understandings of filial obligations (Ikels, 1986). Elders found, on the other hand, that the respect and reverence they expected was replaced by the expectation that elders assume roles as house keepers and child-care providers. Perhaps tautologically, most Chinese elders were not likely to join activities or seek help when strangers were involved because of their social isolation.

A romanticization and misrepresentation of solidarity in ethnic communities and enclaves may lead to invalid conclusions regarding ways class and divisions operate within ethnic economies and enclaves (Pessar, 1995). Segmented enclaves also may help mobilize ethnic economic resources (Sanders & Nee, 1987). Pessar (1995), for example, posits in her study of

Latino enclaves in Washington, DC, that economic resources build ethnic solidarity. Mainstream economic opportunities, such as the sale of a business venture to a North American for a significant profit, overpower ethnically segregated economic opportunities and may diminish ethnic ties. She further links solidarity within the Latino community to a shared sense of discrimination and marginalization and argues that an ethnic affinity can not be assumed to exist simply because of membership in a particular ethnic or cultural group but that intragroup trust and support must be personally fostered.

Enclaves also may provide different benefits to women and men (Gilbertson, 1990; Hagan, 1998). Both Gilbertson (1990) and Hagan (1998) contend that ethnic networks assume different forms over time. Initially, ethnic networks reduce the short-term cost of resettlement and provide social capital, information on jobs, and emotional and cultural support. Hagan (1998) finds that Mayan immigrants' networks in Houston, Texas "operate in gendered ways to produce systematic differences in labor market outcomes for men and women" (p. 56). Gilbertson (1990) and Hagan (1998) both conclude that immigrant women receive fewer benefits from social networks than immigrant men. However, Hagan (1998) shows disadvantages also emerge for men; strong ties within Mayan networks can mean weakened ties with mainstream networks.

A multi-tiered analysis of macro socioeconomic systems, family exchange and care strategies, and micro-level household behaviors will help illuminate influences of cultural dissonance, intergenerational ambivalence, and changing social circumstances of Cambodian refugee families. Internal and external pressures of acculturation and assimilation and internal changes in immigrant families reflect both the retention and loss of different aspects of Southeast Asian cultural identity. All of these factors relate in significant ways to the production and maintenance of family relations and exchanges among Southeast Asian elders and their families.

One also may find creative culture building within the context of external social and economic forces that act upon family relations in a dynamic interplay between structure, culture, and agency (Foner, 1997). Foner (1997) argues that "complex processes of change as customs, values, and attitudes immigrants bring from home begin to shift in the context of new hierarchies, cultural conceptions and social institutions they confront in this country" (p. 967-968). She maintains that Jamaican immigrant women have greater financial independence, households are less patriarchal, and are more egalitarian, unlike Mayan immigrant women described by Hagan (1998),—a change that influences younger immigrants' economic and familial responsibilities to elders. Foner (1997) argues that women and young immigrants are typically more eager to endorse mainstream values that enhance their positions economically, socially, and within the

family. Each of these processes—economic enclaves, cultural identity, and shifting patterns of household relations and family—strongly influences exchanges within and across generations.

Summary

In this chapter I have reviewed literature that provides the foundation for understanding intergenerational exchanges among this group of Cambodian refugee families. I have shown how culture weaves through all interactions and how cultural dissonance influences intergenerational relations. This chapter also offers background as to the underlying concepts for filial piety and adaptation both in Southeast Asia and in the United States. With the information offered in this chapter, data regarding lives and intergenerational exchanges of Khmer families may be placed within the broader context of literature on culture, filial piety, families, and intergenerational exchanges.

CHAPTER THREE: THEORY

A Synthetic Theory for Family Exchange

The theoretical design created for this study, family exchange theory, is derived from a synthesis of the French school of social exchange theory (Ekeh, 1974; Rettig, 1985), constructionist perspectives on aging (Gubrium & Holstein, 1999), and an intergenerational ambivalence conceptual framework (Connidis, 2001; Lüscher & Pillemer, 1998; Pillemer & Lüscher, 2004a). Family exchange theory makes visible how and why families create and engage in patterns, beliefs, and behaviors that surround intergenerational exchanges. It moves beyond an economic model of exchanges to consider social and symbolic values, meanings within exchanges, and positive and negative tensions within those exchanges. It explains why families interact as they do within a particular cultural milieu.

The French school of social exchange theory and constructionist and intergenerational ambivalence analytic perspectives, when applied to create a synthetic theory, provide vital illumination into family exchanges that are not possible when any of these three perspectives are used alone. For example, social exchange theory most frequently evaluates exchanges in terms of socially mediated goods and actions that are motivated by expected receipt of utilitarian rewards by partners in the exchange dyad (Blau, 1986; Homans, 1961). Exchanges are distributed through a balanced process of indebtedness and repayment that are relatively direct, immediate (Homans, 1961), and are defined by exchange parameters (Blau, 1986). Constructionist perspectives illuminate meanings, not necessarily *things* that are understood to exist because of everyday knowledge held by exchange participants who live in a particular social and interpersonal context (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Gubrium & Holstein, 1999; Kenyon, Ruth, & Mader, 1999). Constructivist perspectives commit one to the idea that meanings are formed and informed by social interactions and that knowledge, truth, and reality are pluralistic and plastic, meaning that they are stretched and shaped by intentional human agency (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Kenyon et al., 1999; Schwandt, 1994). An intergenerational ambivalence perspective provides a way to explain the positive and negative tensions within meanings and exchanges (Lang, 2004) but does not provide ways of understanding the exchanges themselves (Rettig, 1985).

A common expectation of researchers in the world of western social science is that one be able to apply a theoretical perspective within a certain time frame to explain the whys and how's of research subjects' actions. A more generalized reciprocal exchange pattern may be found among families; however, even under generalized reciprocity there is an understanding that as relationships become more diffuse, exchanges become more balanced (e.g., a \$50 wedding gift

to an acquaintance's daughter is answered by an exchange of a \$50 graduation gift to the giver's daughter) until exchanges are no longer positive (Sahlins, 1976).

One difficulty in applying social exchange theory to family exchanges is that benefits to actors engaged in family exchanges often are diffuse and not time delimited. Within Cambodian cultural ideology (and other Buddhist ideologies), benefits, or returns on one's exchanges, may not come from the party who received one's offering. Moreover, benefits may not be returned to the giver in this lifetime but are expected to follow into future reincarnations and, using more Western thought, into future generations. It is the combination of these three perspectives, collectivist social exchange theory and constructionist and intergenerational ambivalence perspectives, that provides an explanatory framework to understand why exchanges occur as they do, the meanings different parties apply to those exchanges, and what the consequences of those exchanges mean to the engaged participants.

The following paragraphs explain the foundations of each of the three theoretical perspectives chosen for this study. Although, for reference, I explain both the individualistic school of social exchange theory and the French collectivist school of social exchange theory, in the development of family exchange theory, I rely most heavily on the French collectivist perspective of social exchange theory (Ekeh, 1974; Rettig, 1985; Zafirovski, 2003) because of its inclusion of collective beliefs and actions as central foci. The collectivist perspective of social exchange theory provides a better fit for understanding economic, instrumental, and affective exchanges within family groups without ignoring benefits to individuals. Constructionist perspectives are important because individual and collective histories inform actions, behaviors, and beliefs. Intergenerational ambivalence theoretical perspectives provide explanations for the tensions associated with the desire, across generations, to both follow tradition and adapt to changing life circumstances.

Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory is one of the most utilized theoretical perspectives in social science studies of families (White & Klein, 2002). Social exchange theory offers researchers the opportunity to define, in broad terms, values within exchanges and notions of rationality, rewards, costs, and benefits accrued by members of the exchange (Rettig, 1985; White & Klein, 2002). Yet, empirical evidence does not often support the rational choice model inherent in most discussions of social exchange theory (Zafirovski, 2003). In particular, it is argued that rationality-based social exchange theory fails to explain processes dealing with collectives, such as families or clans, that are not profit-driven (Rettig, 1985; Zafirovski, 2003). Instead, sociocultural factors take precedence over profit-driven factors. Although an individualistic

social exchange theory offers guidance in formulating questions researchers may ask when seeking to explain and predict exchanges, it may be difficult to apply to family and intergenerational exchanges because of its lack of focus on the importance of non-economic, non-individualistic exchanges. It is not my argument that family exchanges exclude economic or individualistic gains; instead, those types of gains are considerably less important within family exchanges than might be predicted using an individualistic social exchange theory. In spite of shortcomings in the traditional, economic-model patterns found in social exchange theory, it offers researchers one tool for understanding *some* of the meanings associated with exchange, especially those associated with personal gain and differences in power held by individuals within the exchange. What is needed for studies of family exchanges, however, is a conscious effort to focus on the “social” part of social exchange theory to facilitate an understanding of individuals *and* the multiple actors and multiple meanings associated with exchanges.

One alternative to this dilemma is a school of social exchange theory that follows paths developed by Bronislaw Malinowski, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Emile Durkheim, and Marcel Mauss (Durkheim, 1893/1984; Ekeh, 1974; Rettig, 1985; Ritzer, 1992). These early sociological and anthropological researchers form the foundation for the French school of social exchange theory. The two paths of social exchange, the more widely utilized individualist perspective (Blau, 1975, 1986, 1987; Ekeh, 1974; Emerson, 1987; Homans, 1961, 1962; Homans & Schneider, 1955) and the French school or collectivist perspective (Ekeh, 1974; Rettig, 1985; Zafirovski, 2003), share the foundation for explaining the movement of tangible and intangible items or events from one party to another. Both schools recognize that exchanges may be between individuals or between groups. They also argue that one exchange must be answered with another exchange. From these fundamental similarities, however, two remarkably different models for understanding and applying social exchange theory emerge. The French school provides a way to recognize and understand both economic and symbolic values within exchanges whereas the individualistic school relies most heavily on an economic model that includes notions of power differentials and balance.

An Individualistic School of Social Exchange Theory

The central themes of the individualist model of social exchange theory are rationalization and the maximization of benefits for minimum costs (Blau, 1986; Dowd, 1980; Homans, 1961; Homans & Schneider, 1955; Klein & White, 1996; Rettig, 1985). Also within the individualistic social exchange model is the notion of influences of macro-social processes on individual patterns of exchange (Blau, 1987; Emerson, 1987; Klein & White, 1996). This model posits that rationality exists within each exchange whereby individuals weigh the costs and

benefits prior to engaging in that exchange, even when the “weighing” is done subconsciously (Emerson, 1987). There may be an acceptance of a delay on one’s return whereby parties in the exchange trade short-term gains for long-term benefits (Blau, 1987; Dowd, 1980). However, at the time of the exchange, the right to repayment is assumed by the original giver and the parameters of acceptable time delays are understood. Until the debt is repaid, the original receiver is indebted directly to the original giver.

Should a receiver of tangible or intangible goods delay repayment beyond the expected time, the original receiver may be excluded by the original giver from future exchange possibilities (Ekeh, 1974) and the exchange relationship is terminated (Zafirovski, 2003). Even when the debt has been repaid, individuals engaged in that particular exchange relationship are not necessarily obligated to engage in future exchanges with each other.

One of the weaknesses in the individualist social exchange model is the tendency of those applying this model to transform exchanges of all types into elemental, immutable things with values assigned as though such exchanges were market-driven (Zafirovski, 2003). Tausig (1987) argues, for example, that under capitalism, the essential qualities of human beings are converted into commodities, for buying or selling according to supply and demand—an assertion that fits well within the individualistic school of social exchange theory. Individualistic social exchange, then, is based on an individual economic self-interest model that includes conversion of human intangible qualities, such as hugs, smiles and nods, into utilitarian, commodified values. Upon such a conversion, intangibles can then be weighed, marketed, and delivered. Unlike a true economic transaction with defined repayment terms, however, the precise debt and time often are unspecified within the social exchange process (Blau, 1986).

When viewed through an individualistic exchange theoretical lens, for example, an initial consideration of time limitations for providing care to frail immigrant elders because of younger family members’ work obligations coupled with elders’ lack of land holdings to pass on to adult children would predict a decrease in positive intergenerational relations and an increase in negative intergenerational relations. Younger family members would be reluctant to provide resources in cross-age interactions (the very essence of intergenerational exchanges) because they could expect little in return. However, in spite of seemingly status-lowering circumstances among refugee elders, several authors report continued reverence for elders and provision of care (Dinh, Kemp, & Rasbridge, 2000; Foner, 1997; Kauh, 1997; Keovilay, Rasbridge, & Kemp, 2000; Kim et al., 1991; Kim, 1999; Pyke, 2000; Smith-Hefner, 1998, 1999; Strumpf, Glicksman, Goldberg-Glen, Fox, & Logue, 2001). On the other hand, Klein and White (1996) argue that

even seemingly altruistic actions such as reverence and provision of care are motivated by self-interest.

For instance, Pyke (2000) drew upon in-depth interviews with Korean- and Vietnamese-American college students to determine how higher educational attainment influenced the commitment to provide care for aging (and less educated) parents. In spite of shifts in beliefs held by these young adults surrounding “becoming American” (i.e., more independent and autonomous, and desiring parents who were less authoritarian and more openly affectionate), all reported adherence to traditional practices of filial piety—including emotional, physical, and economic support for aging parents.

Provision of reciprocal intergenerational care would not be predicted under individualistic social exchange theory because younger adults, who may be better educated or better off financially, would be self-sufficient. They would have little incentive to provide care for elders because elders would have few resources of value in the United States. In keeping with Klein and White’s (1996) argument against purely altruistic behavior, however, a consideration of the underlying strength of traditional intergenerational relations and merit building through filial piety lends support to the perspective in exchange theory that exchanges are based on self-interest. An individualistic exchange model presents a bidirectional reciprocal view of exchange built on both differential power and trust within the dyad of giver and receiver (Blau, 1986; Dowd, 1980; Ekeh, 1974; Homans, 1961, 1962; Klein & White, 1996). It has value when considering family exchanges; however, it is less focused on the role of exchange as a process for creating or solidifying social relations.

French School of Social Exchange Theory

The French school or collectivist model of social exchange postulates that the degree to which an exchange contributes to the corporate existence of society or a particular group increases the relevance and importance of the exchange (Ekeh, 1974). Under this model, giving, which moves beyond observable data and is less dependent on utilitarian or economic assumptions, may be done for the sake of giving and is less a debt than it is a gift (Mauss, 1950/1990). The relationship between the giver and receiver stays with the gift, taking the collective and the self along with memories and obligations of the giver to the next receiver (Mauss, 1950/1990). The contract between the giver and the receiver is enduring across generations, across exchanges, and is not solely an economic act. The gift given when one is young, for example, may be transferred many times before being returned, not necessarily to oneself, but perhaps to one’s descendants in a continual spiral of exchanges.

Giving, when viewed using the collectivist model of social exchange theory, flows into society (Folbre, 2001) and has a spiritual connection (Mauss, 1950/1990). With the giving comes the moral obligation or duty to receive and repay the gift; though not necessarily to the one who initiated the original gift, but, to a larger social collective that transcends time. Giving, receiving, and repaying, when viewed through a collectivist social exchange model, fulfill both psychological and social needs of the groups and of the individuals involved in the exchange (Ekeh, 1974; Malinowski, 1922). Even sacrifice, of one's time, materials, or self is a gift in need of reciprocation among commingled souls and things. The gift, however, also is a burden that cannot remain unanswered because everything given must be given back in a continuous helix of giving, receiving, and reciprocation. Gifts given in this life will be reflected in the gifts that are received in the next life. Such gifts are mutually and perpetually enriching. Ceasing the cycle of exchange eliminates the flow of the gift's essence, that is, the spirit of the giver (Mauss, 1950/1990).

Although the French school of social exchange theory further explains ways in which social exchanges yield a particular morality that is inseparable from society, a morality that provides a template for social conformity (Ekeh, 1974; Mauss, 1950/1990), it fails to inform us of the meanings and definitions actors assign to those exchanges. Constructionist perspectives on aging, therefore, add an essential element for understanding meanings within exchanges.

Constructionist Perspectives

Constructionist perspectives (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Gubrium & Holstein, 1999; Schwandt, 1994) posit that, as circumstances change, interpretations of past and present events change to conform to present interpretations that are based on commonplace knowledge (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Gubrium & Holstein, 1999). Such interpretations provide a lens for understanding meanings and actions surrounding intergenerational exchanges and relationships. Intergenerational exchanges based on a re-storied understanding of "appropriate" care may reflect the conflicts, constraints, and adaptations associated with the phenomenological and collective realities of refugees' lives in the United States. Applying a constructionist theoretical perspective illuminates a "world of meanings" (Gubrium & Holstein, 1999, p. 289) for the changing cultural and socio-political milieu within which refugee families redefine intergenerational exchanges.

Understanding both individual and social histories also allows an understanding of present-day adaptations (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Mills, 1959). The context of the social world, in which refugee families' experiences are embedded, creates particular meanings within selves and families that are informed by the reality of experiences (Kaufman, 1986; Schwandt, 1994). Detzner's (1996) typology of Southeast Asian families, for example, describes families as

separated, lost, resilient, or conflicted. His typology illuminates how multiple social, cultural, physical, and historical structures and events shape and define unique pathways that individuals travel throughout life (Clausen, 1986; Kaufman, 1986; O'Rand & Kreckler, 1990). Coping with events and circumstances different from established norms and routines involves interpretation and negotiation of circumstances along with adaptation and modification of strategies (Clausen, 1986).

The symbolic nature of existence, then, provides ways of explaining and understanding the world (Kaufman, 1986; Lévi-Strauss, 1963). Lévi-Strauss (1963) contends that there must be a manipulation of "...symbols, that is, through meaningful equivalents of things meant which belong to another order of reality..." (p. 200). Unlike poetry, which is filled with symbolism and can lose its meaning with translation, Lévi-Strauss (1963) maintains that myth, with its underlying didactic value, is preserved even through poor translation. Action occurs through the use of myth in the form of stories that explain one's world. It is not a reliance on syntax but the story the myth tells which provides its usefulness. Indeed, there is a need to look to the past in order to understand the present as people constitute "bundles of relationships, which, when extracted from context create a false reality" (Wolf, 1982).

In addition, di Leonardo (1991) stresses the need to understand the social construction of identity, not only a "respect for historical difference and changes," but also to gain "an understanding of the human use of history—of constructions of the past—to legitimize or to contest the status quo" (p. 29). With culture and society as interpretative tools (Geertz, 1983; Kaufman, 1986), human beings construct or make knowledge rather than finding it already constituted. Constructed knowledge is actively achieved and is manifest in self-sustaining and self-renewing interpretations of events, constructed by personal, historical, and political experiences. As such, knowledge is composed of both individual and collective understandings of those experiences that inform and are informed by the reality of individual lives (Geertz, 1983; Halbwachs, 1952/1992; Kaufman, 1986; Schwandt, 1994).

Shifting and molding narratives enlighten and re-educate both the narrator and the audience in spiraling, self-sustaining, and self-renewing patterns of voices and actions stretching simultaneously across histories, through present circumstances and into futures. Constructed narratives allow one to understand, create, and interpret events that have given shape to lived experiences (Kitchell, Hannah, & Kempton, 2000). Kitchell et al. (2000) describe understandings of identity within two environmental groups as fitting into "figured worlds" (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner & Cain, 1998, p. 41) that are formed by historical phenomena and through social encounters across time and space.

Figured worlds are social and cultural reorganizations and reproductions that spread a sense of selves across the landscape (Fitchen, 1991; Holland et al., 1998; Kitchell et al., 2000). Self-conceived identity, through such figured worlds, allows development of group identities (Kitchell et al., 2000). Kitchell and associates (2000) also assert that reconstructions of individual and group identities are made through processes that have historical and political influences that may be filled with tensions.

Intergenerational Ambivalence

In addition to social exchange theory and constructionist perspectives, an intergenerational ambivalence conceptual framework helps clarify how both solidarity and conflict are handled within the context of intergenerational relations (Pillemer & Lüscher, 2004b), including intergenerational exchanges, in everyday life. Lüscher (2004) defines intergenerational ambivalence as the existence of “simultaneous emotions, thoughts, volitions, actions, social relations, and/or structures that are considered relevant for the constitution of individual or collective identities... [that are or can be] interpreted as temporarily or even permanently irreconcilable” (p. 36). Although opposing characteristics are held at the same time, intergenerational ambivalence is not necessarily a negative factor (Lang, 2004). In fact, Lüscher’s (2004) definition points to the dynamic nature of positive and negative aspects of ambivalence that are contained within intergenerational relations. That is, the various ways of constituting identities and relationships may fluctuate within even brief periods of time within a single exchange.

Intergenerational ambivalence should not be viewed as an either/or condition of negative or positive interactions (Connidis, 2001; Lang, 2004). Intergenerational ambivalence is distinct in its coexistence within relationships whereby ideals, habits or traditions may be opposed to the actual experiences, attitudes, or concerns within which families function (Connidis, 2001; Lettke & Klein, 2004; Pillemer, 2004). Of particular relevance in this study is the tension in family relations surrounding dependency and autonomy, social and cultural norms, and exchanges (Connidis, 2001; Fingerman & Hay, 2004; Lüscher, 2004; Pillemer, 2004).

Events that have a profound effect on lives of aging refugees such as family losses, social dissonance, and imposed identities (Daniel & Knudsen, 1995; Detzner, 1996, 2004; Ong, 1995, 2003), require close examination in the context of intergenerational relations (Fingerman & Hay, 2004). Permanence and durability of family relations allow ambivalence to exist, especially when families have been separated, destroyed, reconstituted, or redefined (Detzner, 1996, 2004; Lewis, 2001) or otherwise have encountered events outside normalcy (Fingerman & Hay, 2004). In most cases, family ties are considered to continue across generations regardless of the

closeness, or distance of family members (Fingerman & Hay, 2004). Family ties may continue even in the face of ambiguous loss (Boss, 2002; Boss & Kaplan, 2004) such as experienced by Cambodian refugees fleeing the Khmer Rouge.

Power structures in intergenerational relations typically shift across the lifespan (Connidis, 2001; Fingerman & Hay, 2004; Lüscher & Pillemer, 1998; Pillemer, 2004). Power shifts within refugee families may occur before a traditionally acceptable age and can increase levels of intergenerational tension (Smith-Hefner, 1999). Under ideal circumstances, power exists primarily within parents' authority; however, as parents age, a structural shift to more lateral relations may develop (Fingerman & Hay, 2004). In the case of refugees, children may assume a more powerful role because of different degrees of language acquisition, marketable job skills, or simply the ability to drive (Gelfand, 2003; Lewis, 2001; Smith-Hefner, 1999). Even within more equitable intergenerational relationships, offspring may continue to crave parental approval and assistance across their own and their parents' lifespans (Fingerman & Hay, 2004).

Permanence and durability of family ties, self and collective identity, and power structures may be disrupted at any or all stages of life (Becker & Beyene, 1999; Boss, 2002; Fingerman & Hay, 2004; Lewis, 2001) regardless of family members' desires for continuity. Lang (2004) posits that intergenerational relationships may take on four characteristics: they may become atomized or loosely organized and distant, individuals may feel captured and strained, they may become closer and display more solidarity, or they may become emancipated through fulfilling moral obligations but at an emotional distance. Social and cultural dissonance may be expected to drive a transformation of beliefs and behaviors surrounding filial piety and is likely to contain significant levels of intergenerational ambivalence.

Family Exchange Theory

Family exchange theory, through the combination of these three perspectives and frameworks, provides a more comprehensive lens through which to view collectivist, reinterpreted exchanges within the context of the push and pull of conflicting cultural ideologies. Self and collective ideologies based on social and cultural norms and behaviors are defined and displayed in the context of intergenerational exchanges (Alba & Nee, 1997; Foner, 1997; Gans, 1997; Halbwachs, 1952/1992). Children's ideologies, for example, may be derived from parents' influences and parental ideologies may be derived from the actions of their children in a whorl of events and histories that surround each. Individual and collective ideologies inform meanings and types of exchanges just as collective and individual histories influence present and future beliefs and behaviors.

Ambivalence may arise within a tempest of intergenerational relations because parties in the relationship may be tossed and torn between defining their own beliefs as members of a particular family, social or cultural group and differentiating themselves from one another (Fingerman & Hay, 2004). Family exchange theory guides researchers' selection of information about construction and meanings of ideologies and exchanges. For example, participants' reasons for engaging in exchange can be gathered for analysis through interviews. Behaviors associated with intergenerational exchanges may be recorded through participant observation. In this way, researchers may include both stated meanings and observed interactions among intergenerational exchange participants. Questions as to what givers describe as motivations and meanings within exchanges can be compared to what recipients describe as underlying motivations and meanings for the exchange. Under family exchange theory, it is particularly important that researcher listen and watch carefully to determine ambivalent statements and actions.

Identity includes both collective and self. One is intricately intertwined with the other. Family exchange theory recognizes that the socio-cultural milieu within which individuals and collectives operate forms bridges between identity and intergenerational exchanges. The exchanges, much like a core multifaceted identity, create an infinite loop surrounding and informing identities. The conflict and solidarity associated with intergenerational ambivalence may be thought to create an inward pulling and outward pushing movement of intergenerational relationships and exchanges.

Domains within Family Exchange Theory

Using family exchange theory, data may be organized using three domains: types of exchanges, underlying meanings within exchanges, and ambivalence among exchange partners or groups. Understanding each of these three exchange domains provides a way to predict shifts in patterns of intergenerational relations. Family exchange theory illustrates the myriad factors that create meanings and points of view within and across generations, as well as meanings and points of view of individuals, that may lead to variations in types and meanings of exchanges that can, in turn, lead to ambivalence.

Researchers may choose to investigate a particular type of intergenerational exchange. For example, one may seek to determine meanings and ambivalences found in families' living arrangements when an elder moves into the home of a younger family member or when a young adult returns to live with parents or grandparents. In this dissertation, I chose to investigate intergenerational exchanges associated with the underlying concept of filial piety. Therefore, it was necessary for me to identify multiple types of exchanges within that framework. Family exchange theory also offers a way for illuminating connections across webs of exchanges,

whether researchers choose to investigate one or several types of intergenerational exchanges, to provide a better understanding of how those exchanges operate to influence family and community relationships.

Building Knowledge through Family Exchange Theory

Family exchange theory illuminates connections between changed life circumstances and cultural transitions that shape attitudes, preferences, and behavioral patterns associated with family exchanges. The creation of a synthetic family exchange theory provides a way to recognize and explain differences in attitudes and behaviors surrounding family exchanges based on particular phenomenological histories. Beliefs and behaviors are informed by lifetime experiences imbedded in particular historical, cultural and social contexts and the tensions that may result from different experiences of various family members. Family exchange theory provides a way for researchers to holistically view intergenerational exchanges by integrating data on types of exchanges, meanings of those exchanges, and internal struggles as individuals and families negotiate changing life circumstances.

Applying Family Exchange Theory

Family exchange theory may be applied when examining exchanges at both micro- and macro-levels. At the micro-level, it can assist researchers in determining individual meanings and benefits with a particular intergenerational exchange transaction. At the macro-level, it can assist researchers in understanding more broadly how families adjust to changing social and cultural influences, how those influences shape intergenerational relations, and how reshaped intergenerational relations inform changing personal, social, and cultural beliefs and behaviors.

Armed with information derived for using family exchange theory, social service agencies, for instance, may be better able to provide programs that help families maintain strong relationships in the face of cultural dissonance, no matter what may be the cause of that dissonance. Although this dissertation addresses cultural dissonance among Khmer families that was caused by migration associated with war in Cambodia and, subsequently, resettlement and life in the United States, it may also benefit researchers who work with other ethnic minorities or mainstream American families.

Family exchange theory might also be useful when researchers are investigating intergenerational exchanges where other types of cultural dissonance among families may have created ambivalence, such as might be experienced by families whose generations have vastly different educational experiences or those who hold different notions regarding sexual preferences. Moreover, family exchange theory fills a gap in exchange theories by including

broad, collectivist notions of exchange along with individual and collective meaning making, considering histories, present circumstances, and future expectations, and describing ambivalence in intergenerational exchanges without ignoring individual self-interests.

Summary

In this chapter, I have explored two schools of social exchange theory (individualistic and the French, collectivist school), constructionist perspectives, and an intergenerational ambivalence conceptual framework. Each of the three offers valuable tools for understanding intergenerational exchanges. Each alone, however, lacks explanatory power when examining family exchanges. In order to better understand why intergenerational exchanges operate as they do, it was necessary for me to synthesize these three perspectives into a coherent whole—family exchange theory.

Family exchange theory provides a framework into which researchers may place intergenerational exchanges. It offers a three-part set of domains for understanding how exchanges are “fit” into changing socio-cultural space: types, meanings, and ambivalence. Each intergenerational exchange or set of exchanges may be understood by applying family exchange theory. It is necessary to utilize interview and participant observation research methods to uncover and understand multiple layers within the three domains.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODS

An Overview of Ethnographic Methods

I used ethnographic research methods as the foundation for a representation of intergenerational exchanges across generations of Cambodian refugee and immigrant families. Ethnographic methods include participant observation, group meetings, informal, unstructured, and semi structured interviewing, and a review of materials prepared by others. I interviewed a total of 79 people whose ages ranged from 15 to 94 years. Of the 79 people interviewed, 31 were selected for in-depth interviews that focused on intergenerational relations and exchanges. These 31 individuals, who ranged in age from 15 to 83 years, were chosen based on two criteria: residential location and membership in an extended family. These family-focused interviews were conducted over three periods, May through August 2002, late October 2003 through mid-November 2003, and late December 2003 through January 2004. This dissertation is primarily focused on information gathered from these 31 family members.

Interviews with the remaining 48 individuals took place over multiple periods beginning in October 1997 through December 2001. Their ages ranged from 55 to 94 years. These earlier individual in-depth interviews were drawn from a convenience sample of elders age 55 years or older. I included elders beginning at age 55 because this is the most often stated chronological age used to define elder status within the Cambodian community. Multiple topics were discussed with this group of 48 elders including war experiences and survival, traditional medicine, health beliefs and behaviors, and everyday life. Information gathered from this earlier group provided direction for the later family-centered research and background data for this dissertation.

Analysis of all data was ongoing as the project advanced. The inclusion of wide-ranging topics such as traditional cultural ideologies surrounding respect, obligation and faithfulness, politics, occupations, ancestor worship, social networks, and survival strategies occurred through in-depth interviews, deep narratives, and extensive interaction with people individually and in groups. A consideration of actual behaviors as group interacted with families, communities, and society (Wolcott, 1994) provided a way to recognize beliefs and practices that were influenced by larger political and social institutions. "Progressive focusing" (Wolcott, 1994, p. 18), or moving from a wide view of political and social ideologies to specific up-close individual actions allowed considerations of particular experiences that showed individual agency within apparently collective actions (Abu-Lughod, 1988). For example, during ancestral ceremonies in the Cambodian community, it was important to take into account both community and individual participation to gain a fuller understanding of meanings ascribed to ceremonies and celebrations.

Writing fieldnotes concretely rather than abstractly (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995) provided vivid and descriptive narratives filled with close range details. Concrete fieldnotes included sensory imagery that illuminated actions, smells, and flavors that often accompanied interviews and encounters. A purposeful selection of images and words were used in this dissertation to construct the world of Khmer individuals, families, and communities (Emerson et al., 1995). Purposeful selections are probably even more important than creating vivid images because particular ethnographies emerge (Abu-Lughod, 1991) surrounding families' understandings and meanings of intergenerational exchanges. Selecting images and words allowed the recreation of partial realities based on perceptions, understandings, and interpretations narrators constructed and that I heard, filtered, and recorded (Emerson et al., 1995). Although I have striven to accurately interpret events, lives, and activities told by Khmer elders and families, this dissertation serves as a re-creation of individual and collective conceptionalizations of realities.

Participant Observation

Participant observation can be, simultaneously, the most rewarding and most frustrating part of ethnographic research. Participation allows the researcher to be engulfed by actions and "awash in immediacies, as well as entangled in vernacular" (Geertz, 1983, p. 57). Observation allows the researcher to remain as an outsider who can provide an interpretation of observed actions by stepping back from those actions (Corbin, 2002; Keith, 1986; Schwandt, 1994). At times, activities grind to a halt and there seems to be little to observe or record. At other times, it is necessary to move at a break-neck speed simply to keep up with the action. Participant observation allowed me to become more closely associated with community members so I could observe the ways they negotiate circumstances of daily life, family relations, and community involvement. It was also a way for community members to become more comfortable in my presence and to begin to interact with me less as an observer and more as a participant.

Participant observation involves multiple levels of immersion in the host culture until there is a sense of familiarity between the researcher and the researched (Corbin, 2002; Keith, 1986). Participant observation makes the research an interactive process (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). The researcher participates in everyday activities and special events, happy celebrations and mundane tasks, all while maintaining just enough distance and objectivity to record and later analyze what was observed (Bernard, 1995; Corbin, 2002). My interactions in the community ranged from helping with routine chores to attending sacred ceremonies. Time spent in the community ranged from a short two week stay to spending several months living with a host family. The inclusion of participant observation allows both the researcher and the subjects to

become accustomed to each other so that interactions become more natural. Participant observation provides ways to see and experience actions rather than relying solely on others' descriptions.

One task that has proven to be challenging, however, is maintaining the distinction between multiple aspects of self (Corbin, 2002). My role as researcher has become intricately intertwined with my role as a friend and a fictive kin member of the community. Part of this fusion of roles occurred as a consequence of the large time commitment essential to successful participant observation (Bernard, 1995). Part of it occurred as a consequence of the kindness the members of this Khmer community have shown me and the reciprocal nature of my relationship with them. I was an interactive researcher in the Khmer community for more than six years. I hope to remain their friend and "younger sister" for many more.

Discussions and Interviews

Group meetings, or focus group discussions, provided a way to articulate research goals and methods and to discuss issues of confidentiality and informed consent (Bernard, 1995). Less formal group meetings provided a way for me to listen while participants in the group told broad, collective stories and raised issues specific to the community. This method of interviewing allowed me to determine, with participants' input, what issues within this particular community were most relevant and how I might go about addressing those issues (Fontana & Frey, 1994; Morse, 1994).

I conducted informal and unstructured interviews with each participant in this study (Bernard, 1995; Fontana & Frey, 1994). When conducting informal interviews, I had no preconceived notion of the direction of the interview. This method of interviewing allowed me to get to know the members of the community in an unstructured way and to build rapport. Unstructured interviews also were conducted with members of the community. When conducting unstructured interviews, I had an overall plan for the direction of the interviews but did not have a specific set of questions (Bernard, 1995). Unstructured interviews are very useful in ethnographic studies because they allow long interactions where participants can "open up" and tell their own narrative accounts of a particular topic. Each of these methods, group, informal, and unstructured interviews, proved to be highly effective for learning about Khmer family life.

Because I wanted to concentrate on family exchanges, I also used a semi structured interview technique with each of the families I represent in this dissertation. For each of these interviews, I used an interview guide with categories of questions about family interactions and relationships (see Appendix A). I developed the interview guide based on a guide used by Strumpf and colleagues (Strumpf et al., 2001) for a comparative study of urban-dwelling elderly

Cambodian, Vietnamese, Soviet Jewish, and Ukrainian refugees. The instrument developed by Strumpf et al. (2001) includes demographics, immigration and resettlement histories, health status of the primary caregiver and the elder, assistance provided by the elder to others, evaluation of the elder's functional ability, types of informal or formal services used, access to services, attitudes toward use of services and family assistance, quality and specific interactions with the elder, culture and religion, and income or socioeconomic status. I shortened and modified the Strumpf instrument based on information I gathered from group meetings, and informal and unstructured interviews.

The interview guide allowed me to compare answers to the same questions across age groups. Semi structured interviews, however, provided the least amount of data. Across all ages, individuals were more constrained in their answers. In spite of having known me for several years, older Khmers often assumed a posture of deference more like one that might be seen during an interrogation. Younger Khmers were less likely to appear deferent but interacted with me more like they might interact with a teacher or supervisor to whom they were providing the "right" answer. Answers across all ages were shorter, more concise, and less likely to move beyond the "public" view of "appropriate" intergenerational exchanges into the more "private" realm of actual behaviors I observed over the course of my 6-year interaction with this group. These observations point to the need for understanding the histories of the people interviewed. My mistaken assumption that, because they knew me, I would be able to move quickly through a more structured interview process, provided a valuable lesson. The data gathered by semi structured interviews remains valuable when combined with other interviews and with participant observation. The primary lesson in these data, however, is the need to recognize the authoritative voice of the researcher when working with marginalized people (Kingfisher & Millard, 1998) and to strive to temper its effect through research designs that are sensitive to life histories.

Language

Many of the people I interviewed had some English language proficiency. However, most elders spoke only Khmer. Language differences can lead to significant misunderstandings even with the aid of an interpreter (Fontana & Frey, 1994). I realized early in my interactions with the elders of the community that I would need to learn to speak Khmer if I expected to gather more accurate data. Early interviews (from 1997-2000) were conducted with the aid of an interpreter or were conducted in English when the participant was bilingual. Many of my early encounters were more bounded interactions such as during celebrations at the temple or small ceremonies held in private homes. Although I was able to speak and understand only the most basic Khmer in these early years, I was able to gather rich, thick descriptions of actions, events,

and behaviors. I recorded the “flavors” of my surroundings beside the notes I made during interviews (Geertz, 1973).

I studied Khmer language at the Southeast Asian Summer Studies Institute (SEASI) held at the University of Wisconsin in Madison during the summer of 2001. While at SEASI, I learned to speak, read, and write Khmer. Although my language skills are not much more advanced from that of a beginner, from that time on, interviews with elders were conducted by me in Khmer. Most interviews with individuals below age 40 were conducted in English. When a person was bilingual, I conducted interviews in the language they chose. Although I speak Khmer, I also had an assistant with me during most interviews so that I could seek clarification when necessary. In addition, I returned to most interviewees to discuss my understandings of what they had told me in the original interviews.

Consent and assent forms were written in English and Khmer. Consent forms used before September, 2001, were in English and a translator interpreted them on site when the subject did not speak English. After September, 2001, all relevant documents were written in both Khmer and English. I read the documents to any participant who was not literate. I obtained assent and parental consent for those participants who were at least 15 years old but younger than 18 years old.

Analysis

Ethnographic research involves a constant analysis of data to uncover trends, patterns, issues, and themes as they unfold (Bernard, 1995). Data gathered as fieldnotes were recorded with careful attention to detail and context and were matched with semi-structured interviews, unstructured interviews, and participant observations (Bernard, 1995). Collected data were analyzed line by line to categorize multiple ideas and issues using an “open coding” process (Emerson et al., 1995, p. 143). The identification of ideas and issues led to more focused coding whereby more finely nuanced topics and themes were identified. Notations and memos were written to correspond with fieldnotes and the themes identified through this multi-stepped process of sifting and sorting themes. Ethnographic analysis is an iterative process of general reading, close reading and writing, followed by general reading that directs the researcher’s attention more deeply into the data. Fieldnotes and written notations read as a whole after coding facilitated my recognition of significant themes such as age and gender differences in expressions of filial piety, webs of connectivity across families, widespread mutual assistance, and family closeness across various distances

Khmer Elders and their Families

Sample Characteristics

Because of my long term relationship with the Gulf Coast Cambodian community, I utilized convenience and snowball sampling whereby I relied on introductions by community members to other community members to gain access to most families in the community (Bernard, 1995). Contacts made using these techniques allowed me to reach both men and women in the community. Many introductions were made during community-wide religious gatherings, celebrations, and dinners, which then led to interviews. Convenience and snowball sampling techniques can limit the range of persons interviewed and the ability to generalize conclusions beyond the particular group involved in the study. The community in which I worked is relatively small so I was able to interview most adult members who resided there.

Participant Categories

As previously explained, this project included extensive participant observation beginning in October 1997 and continuing over multiple periods through January 2004. I conducted multiple types of interviews and interactions with most elders and their families who were residing in the coastal Cambodian community during those years. In addition, interviews were conducted with elders and extended families outside the core community of Veluvanna Village. I conducted a total of 79 interviews. For this dissertation, however, I am focusing on interviews with 31 people who belong to three extended families. The remaining 48 interviews provide extensive background data for understanding Khmer family life in general. Table 1 provides additional information on each extended family member according to family location, gender, and age.

Interviews ranged from 2 to 5 hours long. Longer interviews usually included a shared meal. After receiving informed consent from all participants, I conducted interviews in the participant's language of choice. Most elders and adult women speak Khmer only or have very limited proficiency in English; therefore, most interviews with elders and adult women were conducted in Khmer. In all but one extended family interview, multiple family members were present. Presence of multiple family members may have added to the constraint in participants' answers.

Age

Data were gathered from multiple members of the family exchange network across four age categories and three proximity levels. Table 1, below, diagrammatically presents these categories and locations. The four age categories of individuals are those age 61+, age 40-60

years, age 25-39 years, and age 15-24 years. Interviews and interactions with individuals age 61+ captured information from individuals who reached middle adulthood in Cambodia and were considered elders in the U. S. Khmer population. Individuals aged 40-60 years represented those who reached young adulthood in Cambodia and who were just attaining elder status in the United States. Participants who were age 25-40 years were children when they immigrated to the United States. Category 4, age 15-24 years, included individuals who were born in the United States. The three older age categories provided ways to understand long-term versus short-term enculturation in homeland culture. The youngest age categories also allowed a consideration of those individuals who had experienced Khmer culture in the United States through family and community interaction, had not lived in Cambodia, and had only experienced Cambodian culture through interactions with other Cambodian people in the United States.

LOCATION	FAMILY MEMBERS AGE 61+	FAMILY MEMBERS AGE 40-60	FAMILY MEMBERS AGE 25-39	FAMILY MEMBERS AGE 15-24
Veluvanna Village Family	Mok (M70) Nahkrey (F69) Prahm (M64)	Mai (F60) Devi (F58)	Vong (M34) Ny (F32)	Vuthy (M17) Mena (F16)
Fort Simon Family	Samnang (F72) Sy (M62)	Keav (F59) Meng (F48)	Chou (M27) Kiri (F22)	Jharra (F18) Chynna (F17) Eang (F15)
Island Breeze Family	Bun (M83) Loung (F82) Khouy (M62)	San (M60) Moli (F55) Choung (F51) Chea (F51)	Keang (F26) Vanna (F25)	Seng (M22) Sary (F22) Geak (F19) Ly (F15)

TABLE 1. Extended Families. This table shows each extended family member by location, pseudonym, gender, and age.

Proximity

Proximity categories were based on three levels. There were approximately 125 Khmer families who routinely interacted as a self-recognized community. The first geographic proximity level was the core physical Gulf of Mexico Cambodian community. It consisted of approximately 180 acres of pine, pecan, and oak forest and was occupied by approximately 40 Khmer families. There were no other ethnic groups living within the boundaries of the village. The second proximity level was comprised of approximately 65 additional families who lived

within a 15 mile radius of the core community. Another 20 or so families lived within about a 90 mile radius of the core community and constitute the third proximity level. Families living within the village and within a 15 mile radius tended to interact multiple times each week through visits, phone calls, temple activities, and work. Those families living beyond a 15 mile radius tended to interact within the core community one to two days each week, most often through phone calls, work, or weekend interactions in the temple.

Sample Size

In-depth interviews were conducted with 31 extended family members and 48 elders. These interviews, along with data gathered across the 6-year time span of my interactions with this group, allowed me to identify patterns and trends found across the population and provided saturation (Morse, 1994). Saturation occurs when there is repetition in the data that confirms previously collected data. Even when reports by participants become repetitious, however, it is not possible to have known all there was to know (Rubinstein, 2002).

Khmer families in this region average 8 members per family. Those families with an elder present have, on average, five family members who are age 15+ living within one residential unit (though not always under one roof). Nine family members from the core community, nine family members from the second proximity level, and thirteen family members from the third proximity level were selected for in-depth, structured interviews. In addition, 48 elders from across all proximity levels were interviewed during interactions with me at various celebrations, ceremonies, and family gatherings. A sample size of three extended family groups (31 individuals) and background data from interviews with 48 elders provided adequate coverage and saturation for in-depth qualitative data gathering and analysis (Morse, 1994).

Summary

Gathering and recording interviews, narratives, and interactions using the above described methods and analyzing and understanding each particular action, behavior, or belief combine to create a collective ethnography of actions, behaviors, or beliefs of the group (Abu-Lughod, 1991). Interviews complement data gathered through participant observation and provide a broader view of beliefs and behaviors. It is the combination of these techniques that allow a richness and depth toward understanding the social, cultural, and political processes that created the lived experiences of Southeast Asian elders and their families that would not otherwise have been possible. Collecting and analyzing data according to proximity to the core Khmer community, by extended family group, and across ages provided important breadth and depth to this dissertation.

CHAPTER FIVE: A VIGNETTE OF PEOPLE AND PLACE

Finding a Place in the United States

Ethnic Communities

Most Southeast Asian refugees were resettled by various aid agencies to large metropolitan areas such as Long Beach, California or Lowell, Massachusetts, where refugees live in multiethnic, inner-city housing developments (Becker, 2003; Conquergood, 1992; Smith-Hefner, 1999). The core Gulf of Mexico refugee community, however, is especially important to study for several reasons. First, the core community, Veluvanna Village, was created by Khmers from 180 acres of forest land. Second, there is no other Khmer-only community of its kind in the United States. Third, most homes in Veluvanna Village are privately owned and are occupied by multiple generations. Fourth, Veluvanna Village is located in a rural area. Finally, although Becker (2003) includes in her study of meanings of place mention of the ability of some Latino immigrants to live their entire lives in mono-lingual ethnic neighborhoods, there is no research available on refugee families living in rural areas of the United States in predominantly mono-lingual (whereby the language spoken almost exclusively in the neighborhood is not English) and mono-ethnic communities. This is not to say that Veluvanna Village excludes American mainstream culture. Indeed, American influences permeate the village in the way of dress, youngsters playing video games, and the favoring of “junk foods” at children’s birthday parties. Although all age groups speak Khmer, the favored language during interactions between adolescent and teen peers is English and few learn to read or write Khmer. However, Khmer cultural practices continue to dominate across most interactions within the village.

Rural Environments

Aging in rural environments has received considerable attention over the last several decades. Researchers often find that rural elders face multiple jeopardies associated with age and place (Fitchen, 1991, 2000; Glasgow, 1993, 2000; Rowles, 1988; Rowles & Johansson, 1993; van Willigen, 1989). Some of these factors include elders’ socioeconomic status (Coward, Duncan, & Netzer, 1993; Glasgow, 1993, 2000; Glasgow & Brown, 1998; McCulloch & Kivett, 1998; McCulloch & Lynch, 1993; McLaughlin & Holden, 1993; Scheidt & Norris-Baker, 1993), their access to health related services (Buckwalter & Davis, 2003; Casarett, 1991; Coward et al., 1993; Glasgow, 1993, 2000; Magilvy & Congdon, 2000; Magilvy, Congdon, Martinez, Davis, & Averill, 2000; Riedel, 1998), their employment histories or opportunities (Glasgow, 1993; McLaughlin & Holden, 1993; Scheidt & Norris-Baker, 1993), and the out-migration of younger individuals who might otherwise comprise elders’ informal social networks (Magilvy &

Congdon, 2000; Scheidt & Norris-Baker, 1993; Shenk & Christiansen, 1997; van Willigen, 1989). Each of the factors listed above that jeopardize health and well-being of rural dwelling elders is magnified in the lives of aging refugees. Veluvanna Village provides a wonderful laboratory for exploring family exchanges and ways in which filial piety is manifest within the context a mono-ethnic, rural community. The following portrayals of Veluvanna Village, Fort Simon, and Island Breeze provide ways for readers to visualize places and people described in this study.

Study Area

This chapter provides descriptions of the study area: a small rural Khmer community with its temple and seclusion, a nearby fishing town with pockets of Khmer families, and a moderately distant city with several Khmer families scattered about within its borders. It also includes descriptions of three families, one from the village, one from the town, and one from the city. It is my intent to provide a verbal snapshot of these three families and the places wherein they reside so that the reader may begin to envision how these families interact with each other and their environs. Table 1, included in Chapter 3, shows each family member who was interviewed regarding intergenerational exchanges and relations by location, pseudonym, gender and age. Other residents in each location were interviewed; however, only these thirty one individuals were interviewed using the interview guide adapted from Strumpf and colleagues (Strumpf et al., 2001) (see Appendix). Their statements and narratives provide the bulk of information about family relations.

Khmer Communities

The Core Community: Veluvanna Village

As I walk back to Prahm's home following a lengthy visit with Mok and Nahkrey, a mother hen, orange, green and gold feathers glistening, crosses the oyster-shell covered road in front of me. She does a two-steps forward one-step back dance looking for a fresh blade of grass or an unsuspecting insect as her noisy baby chicks swirl around her. Dark-haired children, laughing and squealing, pause briefly from their rambunctious play on piles of dirt left from digging the foundation for the Preah Vihear—the new worship center at the Buddhist temple. The youngest children, who frequently speak only Khmer, stare at me in a mixture of wonder and apprehension. The older, school-aged children, like Vuthy, Prahm and Mai's youngest son, more accustomed to seeing Westerners, scarcely notice me as I walk along the road to Prahm's home where I stay while conducting my research on filial piety and intergenerational exchanges.

Mok, a retired military officer, and his wife, Nahkrey, are part of Prahm's extended family—not by an American notion of kin, but, by choice. Now in their seventies, they live in the village where Mok can get relief from caring for Nahkrey, who has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. Mok and Nahkrey live in a one-bedroom mobile home attached by a covered porch to another mobile home that is occupied by yet another group of Mok and Prahm's extended families. Because Nahkrey has begun to wander, a large chain-link fence and watchful eyes of neighbors, family, and friends keep her safe.

Well maintained, spacious brick homes and mobile homes—some patched together with corrugated tin and heavy plastic, others new, brightly painted, and nicely trimmed—nestle under old oak trees. The delicious aroma of jasmine rice drifts across the hedgerow. Through open windows I can see yellow ready-lights glowing on electric rice cookers waiting for the next hungry person to walk through the door.

Neighbors visit across fences while Khmer music carries on the Gulf breeze. Dah rises from his garden to smile, wave, and ask why I am walking on such a hot day. I tell him that I like to walk. He shakes his head as he laughs and returns to tending his herbs. Although it is still early, the temperature has already climbed. The dew has long since dried on the grass and I can feel sweat beading on my forehead and running down my back.

Nearing my destination, I can hear the rumble of a refrigerator truck as men unload crates of scrambling, bubbling, pinching crabs at Angkor Seafood Company, a crab and oyster processing plant started in the late 1980s by several men who live in the village. Vong, Prahm's oldest surviving son, meticulously cleans the cooking vats in preparation for this new shipment. Inside the concrete block building are rows of stainless steel tables where women and men from the village work rapidly plucking the meat from mounds of crabs. The pungent smell of decaying crab shells hurries me past.

It is a relief to enter the shaded yard of my host family. A grove of persimmon trees invites me to take a circuitous path to the house. Small green cucumbers are nearing crisp perfection as they climb a trellis made of broken limbs. Sturdy plants filled with tiny white flowers promise a taste, in a few short weeks of small purple and white-streaked eggplant. An oak tree, struck by lightening several years ago, gives support to gourds and a twisted melon that Mai, before her death, laughingly called "snake."

Herbs from Cambodia are sprouting under canopies of massive green leafy vegetables, squash, banana trees, and tomatoes. Fragrant flowers, purple and spiked, share space with lemongrass, several kinds of mint, basil, and so many different herbs that I am afraid to help "weed" the garden for fear of pulling up some prized plant. The yard is filled with plants Mai,

Prahm, and others had eaten and used as medicine during the Pol Pot time. Plants for food or for medicine grow rampantly thanks to the rich fertile soil, the blazing coastal heat, and the near-daily afternoon showers. I stand and look around at what had at first seemed to me to be a garden full of grass and weeds and realize that hardly a space is wasted on paths or rows. Devi, whom Prahm recently married, offers me a seat beside her on the swing as Ny, Prahm's daughter-in-law returns to the house to begin preparing lunch. Prahm was recently reunited with a son and daughter, whom he thought had been killed by Pol Pot's army. Although the daughter remains in Cambodia with her husband and children, Vong, his wife, Ny, and their three children now live in the United States, sometimes in Veluvanna Village and sometimes wherever jobs can be found. Vuthy, Prahm and Mai's son, is preparing for his first year in college. Torn by his desire to live independently and the constraints of no job, he has agreed to attend a small state university a 30-minute drive from home. Family, friends, and neighbors stop by throughout the day. Some bring vegetables; some come to purchase duck eggs. All pause long enough to share some news, enjoy some fruit, and hear me speak Khmer—a source of great pleasure and amusement for many of the older women in the community.

Khmer families, such as Prahm's, reunited or newly formed, have created a feeling of home and security in Veluvanna Village. In 1982, three Cambodian refugees, Prahm, Toun, and Pere formed Veluvanna Village so that other Khmers would be able to have a place to belong. These three men desired preservation of their ethnic identity and recognized the importance of group solidarity in maintaining their traditional beliefs and customs. Distinctly rural, Veluvanna Village is the only community of its kind outside Southeast Asia. It was formed and is occupied and governed exclusively by Cambodian refugees. After setting aside nine acres in the center of the property for construction of a Buddhist temple and cultural center, the men divided the land into three-acre parcels. The temple serves as both a religious center and a community cultural center. Because of the importance ascribed to the building of a temple, its use by Khmers from each area described in this dissertation and Khmer families from surrounding states, it is likely that the village will remain for many years as a hub for Khmer activities. It is equally likely that the village will continue to evolve as younger Khmers, who have more experience with mainstream American culture than today's elders, grow into leadership positions.

The men who originally purchased the land for Veluvanna Village agreed to sell the parcels only to Khmer families as a way to help those families adjust to the unfamiliar, and sometimes harsh and hostile, environment of refugee life in the United States. The pattern of Khmer-only residents continues through selective word-of-mouth notifications of land or homes for sale. Veluvanna Village provides a welcome relief from the stresses of learning English,

trying to discern what kinds of foods were available in the local markets, and looking for jobs that might support a family. The oyster-shell-covered private road that allows access to Veluvanna Village connects members of the Khmer community to rural Alabama by way of a narrow pothole-filled county road. Forty Cambodian families (approximately 200-225 people) currently live within the 180 acre village.

Some homes in Veluvanna Village are filled with American-style furnishing; others are more sparsely furnished to allow greater facility for crowds to sit on the floors. Often, cooking is done outdoors over wood fires or with propane burners. Banana trees line fence rows and Khmer-style gardens greatly outnumber American-style gardens. Khmer elders and families with whom I interacted, at first consideration, appeared to adhere to a lifestyle more like the one they followed in Cambodia. Elders cared for grandchildren, most maintained small vegetable and herb gardens, and they devoted considerable time to the Buddhist temple. Most elders lived either in the same house as younger family members or in a separate dwelling within multi-generation housing complexes. Extended families often purchased adjacent lots to assure adequate space for multiple houses to be built, depending on the needs of the family. However, there were also considerable “mainstream American” influences in the village—younger Khmers played video games and listened to loud hip-hop music. Young to middle aged adults adhered to time patterns dictated by a 40-hour work week. Only a few members of the community remained surrounded almost exclusively by Khmer influences and even those were often subjected to Saturday morning cartoons watched by grandchildren in their care. In the beginning, the village provided almost everything many elders and middle-aged women needed to continue traditional patterns of intergenerational exchanges.

Just inside the boundaries of the village, for example, the same three men who purchased the land for the village also created a crab processing plant, Angkor Seafood Company. Before Angkor Seafood Company was forced to close because it was allowing chlorinated water to flow into a natural stream, it employed many women and elders who lived in the village—a considerable benefit to those individuals who could not drive or, because of shared caregiving responsibilities, needed to work very flexible hours. Now, few elders venture outside the confines of the village to find work. Many of the women who worked in Angkor Seafood Company now work for other seafood extraction companies in Fort Simon, a small town nearby, and rely on elders for childcare. Because Veluvanna Village provides a respite from the strain of operating in a remarkably different culture, many Khmer families from surrounding towns and communities also gravitate to its welcoming familiarity.

The Surrounding Community: Bay County and Fort Simon

Several small farming or fishing communities dot the southern-most end of Bay County: Fort Simon, Acer Bay, Alvin Bayou, and St. Georges. These small towns are tucked along dusty, red clay roads, alongside marshes and bays, or within old pecan groves. Approximately sixty-five Khmer families are scattered through these towns. Each community is within an approximate 15 mile radius of the core community, Veluvanna Village. One town, Fort Simon, about six miles from Veluvanna Village, serves as a hub for Southeast Asian markets, seafood processing, and small manufacturing outlets. Once a slow-paced town occupied almost solely by white families, Fort Simon has become “home” for hundreds of Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Laotian families. Names like Binh, Dong, Kiri, or Suchin are as likely to be announced during roll call at local schools as Benjamin, Douglas, Katie, or Susan.

Similar to residential patterns within the boundaries of Veluvanna Village, Cambodian families in the surrounding communities occupy a wide range of housing types from mobile homes to small, rundown clapboard houses to expansive, multi-storied brick homes. Unlike Veluvanna Village, however, Cambodian families outside the village live in mixed neighborhoods of white fisherfolk and farmers and Vietnamese and Laotian refugees. There also are a small number of black families who live in the area. Fort Simon has attracted more Southeast Asian families than the others. Acer Bay, Alvin Bayou, and St. Georges have only a smattering of Khmer families. Because of this, most of my interviews were with families living in Fort Simon; although, during celebrations and ceremonies, I have had many opportunities to interact with several of the more scattered families.

Outwardly, Fort Simon, a small fishing town located at the southern edge of Bay County, has not significantly changed since I first began visiting more than 50 years ago. Waterfront seafood warehouses dominate the landscape. Several no-frills discount stores attest to the economic downturn the community has felt over the past several decades. The rusty drawbridge that leads into town still moves as slowly as it has for the past half century and causes traffic to accumulate through main streets and side roads. There is still the smell of salt air mingled with decaying shrimp shells. Many driveways are paved with discarded oyster shells that threaten to cut tires and bare feet alike. The streets are narrow with no shoulders and few street signs. Houses are small and lean and creak against the moist gulf breezes as they stand huddled with packed-earth yards along pot-hole-filled streets. The physical structure of the town seems almost unchanged, as though it has simply stood there and weathered. It looks much like it did when I visited relatives there as a child, only now it appears a bit shabbier and in need of a bit more paint. What has changed, however, are its inhabitants.

The children of my own childhood have grown and many have fled in search of more stable, better paying jobs. They had grown tired of living from season to season, battling hurricanes and mosquitoes as they tried to put food on family tables. They left the cramped conditions of town for the more spacious agricultural lands in the surrounding area. They left the seafood industry for blue- and pink-collar jobs in a larger city a forty-five minute drive north so that when they returned home they had more money and no longer smelled of crab and shrimp.

As they left, the docks and bays filled with a new wave of fisherfolk willing to live in substandard housing and toil long hours in harsh conditions associated with seasonal work in the seafood industry. Most speak a language different than the one spoken by the previous inhabitants known to me as a child. Though the names of roads and seafood companies still reflect the influence of earlier settlers, instead of white families occupying the markets, streets, and homes, Southeast Asian immigrant and refugee families dominate the landscape.

The local Catholic Council maintains offices in town and continues to assist families with English as Second Language classes, job searches, food, clothing and other services. Three Vietnamese restaurants, with printed menus for English speaking visitors and a cook who'll prepare traditional Southeast Asian dishes for those who know enough to ask, now occupy what were once clothing shops, dry-goods stores, and offices that were owned and occupied by white business persons. Asian markets catering to the needs and tastes of Southeast Asian folks are found scattered in back alleys, on main streets, and down small roads. Fifty-pound bags of rice are more common than grits. Fishing boats, of all sizes and shapes, often sport a "flying eye" design on their bows; an indication of Vietnamese ownership. Some boats were salvaged after local, usually white, fisherfolk left them rusting in the briny waters of the bay; others have been newly constructed and cost hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Vietnamese families have scattered throughout the region, many now living in large brick homes; a testament to their adaptation and success in large-scale seafood extraction and processing. Possibly because of French colonization, the conversion of the Vietnamese language to English characters, the introduction of Western-style education, and a shift from Confucianism and Buddhism to Catholicism in Vietnam, Vietnamese families seem to more readily adapt to American mainstream culture. On the other hand, Cambodia and Laos did not embrace Westernization—their alphabet looks the same as it has for thousands of years, education was primarily attained by boys from monks, and their religion is Buddhism. Consequently, Khmer and Lao families often have had a more difficult time making the transition from penniless refugee to successful business person.

Many Khmer and Lao people toil in seafood processing plants, work long hours, and are paid by the pound for the seafood they process. Before becoming proficient at removing crabmeat from its shells or removing the heads from shrimp, most make well below minimum wage. Days often start before dawn and burns, cuts, and bruises are simply considered to be part of the job. English language skills are not needed in most plants. Jobs are most often filled through word-of-mouth advertising. As a consequence, those who speak Khmer tend to work with other Khmer speakers just as Lao speakers work with other Laotians. Several seafood processing plants are located across the region and employ dozens of Southeast Asian women and men as crab pickers, cooks, and cleaners. Manufacturing and construction jobs also are plentiful and offer low-wage jobs to many men. A few individuals work as teachers' aides, store clerks, for relief agencies, or in other trades.

Most Khmer families in Bay County own their own homes. Although the majority of the houses are quite small by mainstream American standards, multiple generations frequently live together. Those families with greater financial ability tend to purchase acreage among rows of soybeans and corn and build luxurious brick homes large enough to house extended families. One strategy several families have followed is to purchase two or more adjacent houses for extended family members, sometimes transforming most of a block into a family compound. It was at such a compound that I first met Sy and his family.

Sy and Keav, his wife of thirty years, have three daughters, Ming, Chou, and Chynna, and one son, Kim. College is not optional for his children; it is expected. Sy also has a wife and daughter in Cambodia. Keav does not know of Sy's "secret family" in Cambodia or that he supports them through periodic remittances. Sy's sister, Kolab, lives on the family compound with her three daughters. An older uncle and aunt occupy another house along with several cousins, their spouses, and children. Small children run from house to house while elders visit and younger women prepare massive quantities of food. Younger Khmers, in their teens and early twenties, gather in gender-segregated clusters to enjoy the music of a local Khmer rock band that has come to serenade us. Interviews become more and more difficult until; finally, we decide to reschedule hoping for quieter surroundings. Quickly, plans are made for a weekend trip to Island Breeze to join a college graduation celebration being held for a young Khmer man, Seng, who lives there with his family.

Distant Connections: Island Breeze

The pull of Veluvanna Village, its temple, its cultural center, and its exclusivity, draw other Khmer families from even more distant towns and cities. Khmer families in one city, Island Breeze, maintain very close ties to Veluvanna Village through their participation in celebrations

and ceremonies in the temple and in private homes. It was not until I had worked with Khmer families for several months that I realized some families I encountered each weekend had driven nearly 90 miles so they could visit the village.

Within 90 miles of Veluvanna Village are two large cities. Caskette, a busy port city about 35 miles away, has a population of about one hundred and fifty thousand people. Only a few Khmer families live within its limits. Although I have not visited them in their homes, I have conducted informal interviews with many of those families when they visited Veluvanna Village. Island Breeze, with a population of about sixty thousand people, is approximately 70 miles away. Island Breeze is also home to a U.S. military base. There are approximately twenty Khmer families who live in this more distance location but maintain close connections with the families of Veluvanna Village and Bay County. Many families from Island Breeze routinely visit Veluvanna Village. In addition, it was quite common for Mok and Nahkrey to drive to Island Breeze each week to check on various families, deliver vegetables, and visit. I often accompanied them.

Long bridges across wide marshlands offer little diversion to break the monotony of the hour and a half drive from Veluvanna Village to Island Breeze. Dropping off the interstate highway and turning toward the city, convenience stores and fast food restaurants provide a hustle-and-bustle level of activity not found in the village. In the distance, whitecaps are dancing on waves in the stiff Gulf breeze. Wide boulevards, sand swept and salty, provide a panoramic view of the Gulf and various bays around Island Breeze.

The beach beckons as Mok, Nahkrey, and I, along with a large group of Khmer families, caravan to a “Chinese” restaurant owned and operated by Khmer friends. We are gathering to celebrate the graduation from college and acceptance into a Master’s program in engineering of Seng, a young man whose grandparents have “adopted” me as their American granddaughter. Afterward, we travel to Seng’s home to visit his grandmother and grandfather because his grandfather was too ill to go to the restaurant.

Similar to Khmer families in Veluvanna Village and Fort Simon, Seng’s family lives in two houses. One house is home to Seng, his parents, San and Choung, and his three sisters, Keang, Geak, and Ly. Seng’s grandparents, Bun and Loung, older aunt and uncle, and cousins share the other home. A large, but open, covered dining area, a kitchen, a bathroom, and extra sleeping space stand between the two modest wood-frame homes. A well-tended garden is filled to bursting with tomatoes, peppers, lemon grass, and other herbs, vegetables, and flowers.

Nearby are other Khmer families who have modified existing homes to better suit their needs, building cooking platforms, external kitchens, and sleeping rooms that will accommodate

large gatherings of Khmer families and friends. A pattern of clustering is repeated in small pockets across the city. Occasionally, Khmer families live among other ethnic groups, white, black, or Latino, separate from Khmers. One member of Seng's family, Chea, a young widow with whom I frequently interact, lives in such a neighborhood with her daughter, Sary. She says she enjoys living among such a diverse group as much as she enjoys interacting with other Khmers.

Island Breeze offers opportunities that Veluvanna Village and Bay County do not. A greater number of both skilled and unskilled jobs are available. Accustomed to people from around the world because of the influence of a military base, there is a higher level of acceptance of difference in Island Breeze than in Bay County. A local community college offers the chance to advance educations without leaving the security an extended family provides. A small state university is within a reasonable drive.

Khouy and his family have taken advantage of these educational opportunities. He and his wife, Moli, their daughter, Vanna, son-in-law, and grandson live in a small home across a busy boulevard from Seng's family compound. Khouy cares for his grandson throughout the day so Vanna can pursue a nursing degree. Khouy and Moli's oldest daughter, son-in-law and their growing family have recently purchased a home away from Khouy and Moli; still a point of contention because she was expected to wait until they could all move together.

Community Differences

There are many similarities to be found at each location: the clustering of families, mutual support, shared responsibilities, and a sense of community. On the other hand, each of these three areas provides different kinds of experiences for Khmer families. For example, each offers different levels of interaction with mainstream American society; Veluvanna Village has the least interaction and Island Breeze the most interaction, on a daily basis, with mainstream American cultural influences. Different types of jobs exist in Island Breeze that are not available in Veluvanna Village or Fort Simon. Veluvanna Village is strictly rural. There are no paved roads, no convenience stores, and no fast food restaurants. Once in the village, the sights, sounds, and smells are predominantly Cambodian. The presence, in Veluvanna Village, of the Buddhist temple and its use as a cultural gathering point provide additional support for continuation of time-honored practices surrounding filial piety and will likely allow a level of sustainability of traditional Khmer culture not possible in other communities.

Khmer families living in Bay County find a mix of rural and small town life. Neighbors may or may not be other Khmers. There are fewer opportunities for some families to hold mainstream American culture at a distance. More families in Bay County and Island Breeze lock

their homes when they are away. There is a lower sense of security in those locations. Most elders must wait for a teen-aged grandchild to drive them to the market or to visit other Khmer elders. Trips to the temple, a near daily experience in Cambodia and in Veluvanna Village, must wait until the weekend when other family members are not working. Bay County provides something of a mid-point between the closeness of the village and near cultural isolation in the city.

The city of Island Breeze has smaller pockets of Khmer families. Interactions and sharing are more confined to families than the more inclusive life of Veluvanna Village where sharing follows a community-wide pattern regardless of kin relations. A few families live in clusters such as those described in Fort Simon, but, many remain isolated due to distance between Khmer homes, limited English language skills, and transportation difficulties.

The Families

A Complex Web

Each of the three extended families: Prahm's family in Veluvanna Village, Sy's family in Fort Simon, and Bun's family (with Seng) in Island Breeze are connected in a variety of ways. One of the most difficult parts of locating distinct families is that a web of relationships defines the lives of the families with whom I interact. For example, Prahm's family appears small in comparison with Bun's family. Prahm's family includes Mai, his deceased wife, Devi, his current wife, Vuthy, his youngest son (with Mai), Vong, his oldest surviving son (with his wife who died in Cambodia), his daughter-in-law, Ny, and grandchildren. Prahm also has a daughter, son-in-law, and grandchildren in Cambodia. Also living in Cambodia are a brother, cousins, and older aunts and uncles. Mok and Nahkrey filled the role of older brother and older sister to Prahm until Mok arranged Prahm's recent marriage to Devi. At that time, Prahm declared Mok to be his father. Devi was related to Mok through his relationship with Devi's aunt, whom Mok calls younger sister. If this is not confusing enough, kinship terms are used to define emotional closeness, not simply blood or marriage relations. So, one's grandmother may also be the grandmother of one's neighbor who has no biological connection what so ever. Should an elder find her- or himself alone, it is not uncommon for a family to simply "adopt" the elder into their household. From that day forward, this elder is the grandparent in that home; due all the reverence and respect of a biological grandparent.

When it came time to find "families" for me to interview, Prahm, Mok, and Khouy each identified what they called "different" families. As I studied their relationships and interviewed them, however, it became more and more apparent that the lines that defined who belonged in which family were blurry at best. Sharing resources and providing types of assistance that are

usually Khmer “family” responsibilities can cause realignment across the lifespan of “who is kin.” Mok, for example, provides a home for two families: one in Veluvanna Village and one in Island Breeze. In each case, he refers to these families as part of his family, but, acknowledges that they do not share the same parents or grandparents. At first, it might appear that he is making a distinction between biological connections and instrumental connections. Upon further questioning, however, he stated that “after Pol Pot, we make our own families. They are our country; they are where we owe our allegiance. All Khmer are family. No difference. We treat all the same. When one needs something, we give it.”

Similarly, Prahm introduced me to one woman, Meng. Prahm described her as a member of a Fort Simon family that was separate from his own. When I interviewed Meng, however, she told me that Prahm was her uncle because her own uncles were killed by Pol Pot. Prahm paid for her wedding. She and her new husband lived with Prahm and Mai until they could find affordable housing. Meng’s children now consider Prahm to be their grandfather and go out of their way to bring him special gifts. When I questioned Prahm about his relationship to Meng and her family, it was clear that he thought of her as his niece but had not described her as such to me because he was trying to “fit” his descriptions of family into a more Western-American framework he thought I would better understand.

As I probed deeper into understanding the construction of family and the ways in which the past infringed upon the current and future needs of these families, the more I realized the difficulty in defining these three groups as separate entities. Each is connected in some way; through experiences in Cambodia and in refugee camps, through resettlement, through affective or instrumental relations, or through informal adoptions. Genealogy charts have little relevance in this study.

Like the hand woven, hand dyed silk found throughout Cambodia and highly prized in the United States, the small nuances; the nubs and texture of each “family” discussed in this work must be considered a construct made by me and by the Khmer people who shared their stories with me. Relationships form an intricately patterned fabric woven by different hands at different times. The fabric may be smooth or it may contain broken and knotted threads or have patches and holes. Sometimes the fabric shows repairs and imperfections. Sometimes it gracefully flows, folds, and conforms to its host’s body. At other times, it may stand crisp and firm. Often, it is difficult to see its internal structure, to see behind the folds and below the patches. Repairs and patches may be nearly invisible. With these caveats in mind, conceptualization of these families as separate groups, cut from different cloths, must be tempered by acknowledging a disjuncture between the ways most of mainstream America defines family and the fluidity with which Khmer

notions of “family” are constructed and how they widely reach across relational bonds. Those in need of assistance, companionship, or support, no matter what age they may be, are incorporated into families. As needs change, relationships may change. An elder may move from one home to another to assist with childcare. A young college graduate may be “adopted” into a Khmer family near where he or she is attending graduate school. In each case, Khmer families represented in this dissertation have created a strong, broad “family” fabric of exquisite complexity.

CHAPTER SIX: INTERGENERATIONAL EXCHANGES: A SYNTHESIS AND ANALYSIS

Lives Touch: Cultures Collide

It would be advantageous for me if the stories told by this group of Khmer families had discrete segments that fit nicely into categories. However, lives are not static nor are people isolated entities. Lives touch, cultures collide. Wherever they intersect, they are changed. Just as the Khmer families in this study strongly hold fast to collectivist, reciprocal relations, they also adapt to changing circumstances brought about by war, migration, survival, and mainstream American values. A realignment of attitudes, such as described by Phinney and her colleagues (2000), regardless of immigration status, are nearly ubiquitous. The realignment, however, is often more pronounced in refugee and immigrant families. The stories told by individuals in this study reflect a resilience of spirit that is monumental in light of the long, arduous journey many have traveled.

In this chapter I weave stories of Khmer families' intergenerational exchanges in the context of filial piety. I describe ways members of each family interpret their relationships with other family members, how those interpretations are shaped by past and present circumstances, and how they take shape under changing life circumstances. Next, I show how participants within intergenerational exchanges exhibit multiple levels of ambivalence.

I also explore how these families have adapted their beliefs and behaviors surrounding filial piety. I describe ways families reinterpret meanings of appropriate relations in the face of social and cultural upheaval and the collision of different value systems—a Khmer cultural ideology of elder reverence and collectivism and an American cultural ideology of youth and independence. It is my hope that the following narratives and explanation of what I understand them to mean for the families involved will assist in illuminating the actions and beliefs surrounding intergenerational exchanges among this group.

The narratives of these Khmer families, whose voices tell of the successes and struggles of Khmer refugee families in the United States, support Liem's (1998) assertion that filial piety is the foundation for the emotions, love, and care within families. Narratives also support others' assertions that younger refugees and immigrants feel obligated to fulfill traditional patterns of behaviors while laboring to fulfill dual roles of "good Khmer" and "good American" (Foner, 1997; Portes, 1996; Pyke, 2000; Smith-Hefner, 1998, 1999; Yee, 1997). In the next pages, I share their stories and I analyze their narratives and comments using a lens developed through stories already told by other Khmers and other scholars in existing literature. I also analyze these data using family exchange theory, a theoretical lens I developed as a result of this dissertation.

Filial Piety: Veneration and Respect

Defining Family

During a gathering in Veluvanna Village attended by Khmers from each of the three areas I previously described, I was offered a description of family and family relations that reinforced the collectivity so apparent in observed interactions. Mok, for example, described Khmer people as his “country” and Samnang, declared that “we are all together; one. No difference.” As the discussion of “family” continued, others expanded on the themes. Khouy reminded me that “the Khmer family is not just those people who live with you. The Khmer family is all Khmer. We are all responsible for each other.” The following remarks by Bun, who is surrounded by his daughters, sons-in-law, grandchildren and multiple nieces and nephews, described his family relations. He said:

Even though I am an old man who has lived a long life, I am very happy. I have a big family around me. Ma [his wife] is good to me. My grandson takes me to the temple when he is home from college. My daughter drives me there on weekends when she is not working. My grandchildren all come to visit me, those who live close by stop in everyday. Those families who live away call me on the telephone to ask if I have eaten rice. This is how Khmer live. We keep our family, old people and young people, close in our minds.

Central themes found throughout this and other discussions of family relationships were affective and instrumental exchanges. Limiting visits to the temple to weekends and the use of telephones to maintain connections are similar to the fusion of old and new ways of engaging in intergenerational relations described by Foner (1997) and the constant adjustment in classifications of appropriate behaviors described by Becker and Beyene (1999) in their study of urban dwelling Khmers.

During in-depth interviews and other less formal occasions, elders often spoke of following the “middle path” and teaching their children appropriate behaviors by example, a finding also reported by Hareven and Adams (1996) and Smith-Hefner (1999). San, who lives in Island Breeze and provides daily care across generations, explained how each generation works to provide a happy life for the other by considering each others’ needs. Older family members strive to teach younger family members. Younger family members strive to provide for the needs of elders and show proper respect for older family members. Care is given according to the needs of the family. San reports:

My daughters take care of everything for me. They cook and clean up the house. They call me to say they love me. They take care of their grandparents too.

I am very happy to see them following the Khmer ways. Khmer family life is peaceful. We learn from our parents and grandparents how to do the right thing.

We see our parents taking care of others and we learn that we must take care of others too. We learn what is right and what is wrong.

We then live our lives this way so that our children and grandchildren can see the right way to live. My children always are thinking of mom and dad. They call us and drive to see us no matter how far away.

San's remarks and his actions show how exchanges are shifted and molded to fit present-day circumstances. As his aging mother- and father-in-law require more assistance, he strives to continue a traditional pattern of filial piety so that his children will learn from his example, just as he learned from his own parents and grandparents. Although his actions are not explicitly linked to his family's health, because they are family centered, they serve as a building block toward a peaceful and healthy life (Berman et al., 1994).

Meng, who lives in Fort Simon, lost most of her family during the Pol Pot years. She explained, "I was the last child born to my mom. My brothers and sisters were separated from us in Cambodia and we think they are dead, so, we were only two of us in the camps and here in the United States." She and her mother were resettled by the U.S. Catholic Council in Bay County in 1982. Meng talked about her relationship with her mother and the relationship Meng's mother has with her granddaughters.

When I came to the US, I was not very old—around 17 years I think. I stayed very close to my mother when we were in the camps. When we got here, she and I had to work long hours together in the crab plant to make money for food. Now she is too old to work so I take care of her. It makes me so happy to see her eating and enjoying her talks with my daughters. That is how old people should live the last of their lives.

Meng's remarks show how families work together across the life span to help each other in a way that is similar to Southeast Asian families described by Knodel, et al. (1995) in their study of Thai elders. Unlike this study of Thai elders who were struggling under economic disadvantage but were living in Thailand and immersed in Thai culture (Knodel et al., 1995), Meng and her family's economic struggles are compounded by refugee status and family losses. When Meng was young her mother cared for her, protecting her in Cambodia and in the refugee camps. When they arrived in the U.S., they worked side by side to rebuild their lives. Now that her mother is old and frail, Meng provides for her needs. Her mother, in spite of her frailty, has maintained close relations with all her granddaughters. Meng's daughters spend considerable time with their grandmother. One daughter, Jharra, remarked, "When my grandma got so sick, nobody minded even getting up [to take care of her] after they had gone to sleep. Because we all share and my grandma is so wonderful."

Interactions across Generations

Another type of exchange, followed by Meng and her family, is a traditional pattern of multigenerational households such as those found throughout mainland Southeast Asia and described by other researchers (Kato, 2000; Knodel & Saengtienchai, 1999; Metha et al., 1995). Meng, her husband, daughters, and mother all share a small house. Meng's intergenerational exchanges with her mother and her daughters shift according to needs. During the social turmoil in Cambodia, Meng's mother was protective. After arrival in the United States, Meng and her mother partnered to create a home for themselves in the foreign world of U.S. culture. Kato (2000) found in her study of Khmer families in Cambodia that the flow of assistance is not linear across life spans. Instead, the flow of assistance is multigenerational, ongoing, multidirectional and mutual. Meng and her daughters provide for Meng's mother and Meng's mother, in spite of her frailty, continues to provide symbolic and affective exchanges in the form of instruction and companionship to Meng and her daughters.

A later discussion with other younger Khmers revealed similar patterns. Vuthy, who is seventeen years old and lives in Veluvanna Village, described how it is important to pay respect to elders and to maintain a good relationship with his father, step-mother, and other elders of the community. He said, "I am grateful for the way things are, the way we live. We have good relationships... I try to help other people, the old people." His attitude and statements reflect a traditional view that recognizes the debt a younger family member owes to older family members. His acceptance of his moral debt to his parents, other elders in the community, and his ancestors is reflective of a collective consciousness (Durkheim, 1893/1984) and a collective memory (Halbwachs, 1952/1992) that informs him of who he is within his family and the larger Khmer community. A collective consciousness and collective memory comes about through Vuthy's interactions with others. His own actions and the actions of others become mutually constitutive.

Tevy, a 15 year old girl who also lives in Veluvanna Village, reports that her grandparents "teach us things by telling us stories about Cambodia." She continued, "When we go to the temple to pray and thank our ancestors, I always appreciate my parents more because I know that I am part of them and that my children will be part of them, too." Her remarks reflect the traditional belief that one's elders are the holders of wisdom (Truyen, 1998) and point to knowledge as exchange. She also indicates in her statements that the knowledge gained through listening to their stories and participating with them in Buddhist religious practices becomes part of the continuation of Khmer beliefs and behaviors: her ancestors, her parents, her own and generations to come (Liem, 1998).

Cultural Collisions: Bending the Tree

Proverbs often are used by older or more experienced members of a culture group to reveal foundational ideologies of that culture to younger members (Kaplan, 2002). For nearly any circumstance, Venerable Sambath, a Khmer monk living in the temple at Veluvanna Village, can recite a suitable proverb. When discussing with him the stresses Khmer families face trying to adhere to a traditional Buddhist ideology while seeking success in the American educational and work system, he expressed the importance of fitting one's self into the blended cultures of Khmer families. He said, "A tree must be trained while it is green. That way, it will bend to fit its environment and will grow strong no matter what shape it must take." This proverb points to the importance of recognizing that it may take effort to fit into a blended cultural milieu through active intervention. It also reminds one that change may occur through the influence of external forces—work, school, or non-Khmer friendships. It points out that adaptation makes one stronger and better able to survive. It is no surprise, then, that younger, "greener" Khmers can bend to adapt to life in the United States much more easily than older Khmers. Khmer family life provides the growing medium; the dissonance of Khmer and American cultural values provides the winds that stir change and shape lives.

Beliefs and Behaviors

Khmer families represented in this study share a foundation, which remains quite traditional, for beliefs and behaviors surrounding filial piety, including intergenerational exchanges. That is not to say, however, that the way traditional filial piety is manifest among this group of Khmer families necessarily follows static traditional patterns. Indeed, even if members of this group had remained in Cambodia, traditions surrounding filial piety would have changed. No culture remains static. Analogous to findings by Detzner (1996, 2004), Kato (2000), and Smith-Hefner (1998, 1999) in their studies of Khmer culture—with its foundation in collectivity, elder veneration, and hierarchies based on gender and age—and American culture—which values independence and autonomy and focuses on youth, behaviors of "appropriate" intergenerational interactions are differently interpreted by different groups. Age and location create different cultural environments that lead to different ways of interacting across generations, different meanings assigned to those exchanges, and different feelings that may be categorized as ambivalent.

Many respondents acknowledge that life in the U.S. creates the need to adapt. Bun's comments regarding his trips to the temple (when his grandson is home from college or when his daughter is not working) are indications of a need to adapt traditional behaviors to better fit life in the United States. The use of the telephone to enquire about an elder's health is another way care

and close relations have changed. If in Cambodia, because of his age, Bun could expect to spend long hours several days each week taking his meals, praying, chanting, and visiting other elders or meditating in the temple. He could expect his family to gather around him for advice and assistance. He might provide land, animals, and fruit trees for each of his children as they grow their own families. None of those things are likely to occur for Bun and his family living in the United States. Instead, they find ways to make changes in behaviors associated with filial piety and hope that those changes are acceptable. They hope that the tree's roots can grow deeply and that its branches can bend and flex to accommodate the needs of Khmer families in the United States.

Freedom: Lost and Found

A common mindset of many U.S. citizens is that we are living in the land of the free. Khmer families, especially those members who fled Pol Pot in the mid-1970s, describe their happiness living in the U.S. where they are free to travel, live, and work where they please. Visiting family and friends, joining other elders at the temple for a noon-day meal, and tending small gardens occupy the days of most elders living in Veluvanna Village. However, social isolation through limited language skills, the inability to drive, or living apart from other Khmer families in Fort Simon and Island Breeze has caused some to question just how "free" they are in the United States.

The ability to lead a quite, family centered life is one of the major draws of Veluvanna Village. Neighbors often install gates between properties to facilitate quick visits. Multiple families live together or in adjacent houses. In Veluvanna Village, it is sometimes easy to temporarily forget the influence of America culture. Knowing each neighbor, their normal activities, the look of their automobiles, and the sounds of their children playing, imparts a sense of security throughout the village. Mok, retired from contract work that took him across the United States, moved back to Veluvanna Village when Nahkrey's health began to decline as she progressed through the stages of Alzheimer's disease. He said:

Here [Veluvanna Village] everybody knows my wife. She can talk to them because they remember [Cambodia] too. We live near other Khmers so we can always help each other. We live here because my wife sometimes wanders away. Here she is safe because everyone watches for her.

His remarks indicate the importance of living among people who not only know you and your family, but, also share histories. His reasoning behind his move is indicative of the importance of triggering one's own memories through collective memories (Halbwachs, 1952/1992). His decision to move back to Veluvanna Village is an acknowledgement of his need for familiarity of language, food, and culture as a way to construct a meaningful life for himself

and his wife among people with shared histories and beliefs. His narrative account of their lives before moving back to Veluvanna Village is filled with frightful events as Nahkrey's condition began to cause her to become more and more confused.

Mok's life in Veluvanna Village is not, however, idyllic. He has changed both his own habits, through early retirement, and his expectations of family involvement. He recognizes the primary reason for his relocation to Veluvanna Village to be his own children's lack of time to assist in the care of their mother. They are no longer able to engage in the types of intergenerational exchanges Mok had expected. His family is similar to other conflicted families, such as those described by Detzner (2004), who are unable to fulfill expectations of care and respect. Aspirations for reaching the "American" dream of home and automobiles has led his children into demanding careers that leave them little time for fulfilling a traditional pattern of family caregiving.

Although Mok strives to keep himself and his wife healthy, similar to the household production of health described by Berman and colleagues (1994), he has determined that, should he become ill and need assistance, his children will be unavailable. "I might join an American church," he muses, "because they take care of old people. Or, I might just go to nursing home." His children's freedom to pursue jobs and affluence contribute to Mok's loss of freedom because of the day-to-day care he must provide to Nahkrey. Mok has changed his expectations of his own children and has nurtured other relationships to fulfill that void. He has also reformulated those exchanges he has with his children, making those exchanges "fit" within an appropriate framework. While Mok speaks of his children with considerable pride, he also conveys his disappointment and stress at not having his own children around to assist him with Nahkrey's care.

Work Takes All My Time

Jobs take considerable time for anyone hoping to achieve the American dream, not just refugee families such as described in this dissertation. However, expectations older refugees have of younger family members do not always align with the realities of living in the United States (Becker, 2002; Chun & Akutsu, 2003; Detzner, 1996; Gelfand, 1979, 1989, 2003). Younger Khmers in Veluvanna Village, for example, sometimes report having two lives, one in the village and one where they work. They strive to find a balancing point for multiple levels and types of intergenerational exchanges and work. One 37-year-old woman stated:

I know I need to do better in visiting with my family, but, I have to work so much and take care of my kids. It doesn't leave much time for taking care of my grandma too. It's hard to know what to do first. Trying to be all things for

everyone is very hard. Sometimes I think I'm stretching too much—too much work, too much time working in the temple.

Her remarks, and those of Mok, illustrate tensions felt as family members try to straddle both cultures and provide levels of care and interaction expected of younger family members, elders or spouses who have become frail, and the demands of employers. Such ambivalence is common across families (Connidis, 2001; Lang, 2004; Lüscher, 2004; Lüscher & Lettke, 2004; Lüscher & Pillemer, 1998; Pillemer & Lüscher, 2004b). Each age group recognizes the push and pull of living within two distinctive cultural traditions. Tensions, both positive and negative, wear on one's ability to "be all things for everyone." Time becomes a scarce commodity and decisions as to how best to use one's time creates internal and external stress. .

The need for earning wages is one of the most significant and often repeated factors many individuals consider when describing ways in which cultures conflict (Gilbertson, 1990; Hagan, 1998; Phinney, 2003; Sanders & Nee, 1987; Smith-Hefner, 1998, 1999). No longer able to stay at home, many women, for example, feel they have lost the ability to provide appropriately for their children and their parents. One woman who lives in Fort Simon declared:

Work takes all my time. If I have any left, I have to take care of my kids. My mom doesn't understand sometimes that I can't always do what she wants. She thinks it should be like in Cambodia where girls take care of everything for their parents.

In addition to simultaneous demands of her job and caring for her family, her remarks also point to gender differences in expectations within Khmer culture and American mainstream culture. Traditional Khmer culture is arranged by an age and gender hierarchy that, across all ages, places women in a lower position than men. Women, especially daughters, are expected to provide multiple levels of care to their parents similar to that reported by Kato (2000), Knodel and colleagues (Knodel, 1995; Knodel et al., 2000; Knodel & Saengtienchai, 1999; Knodel et al., 1995), and Metha and colleagues (1995). Many Khmer women explain that they are torn between finding time to take care of their children, fulfilling parental expectations, and providing a significant portion of the household income. One 34 year-old Fort Simon woman's frustration is apparent in the following statements:

[Life in] America is a lot of work but Khmer must do it. In Cambodia, my parents are at home to take care of kids and visit other old people. Here, my dad is still working, my mom is too sick to help us, and my kids go to day care and learn bad words.

I don't think I am being a good mother or a good daughter if I am away and I don't think I am being good if I am at home. One way, we have each other but the other way we have no food.

I don't have time to do the things my parents want. Sometimes I feel that I am pulled apart—I must be a blend of both Khmer and American but not always at the same time. Sometimes I must be more Khmer and sometimes more American. The hard part is knowing how much of each side to show.

Her dilemma is one shared by others who are struggling to find ways to fulfill obligations (Lewis, 2001; Pyke, 2000; Smith-Hefner, 1998, 1999; Yee, 1997). She feels pulled apart and unable to satisfy demands of both cultures. She feels that she is not a good mother, a good daughter, or a good wage earner; none are given the attention she feels she should provide. Tensions such as she describes are especially strong among women who must maintain Khmer-style households to satisfy their role as culture-keeper and earn wages to satisfy everyday subsistence needs. Conversely, some individuals feel that Khmer culture only is important for its Buddhist teaching and should be left behind in one's everyday encounters. One man asked, "Why should we remember Cambodia?" He continued:

There we work in the field all day and have only a bit of rice. Here we work one day and have enough rice for a week. It is better to live American than keep Cambodia in our heads. We won't go hungry, our parents and our children will be full.

Pressures, such as reported by these two individuals, operate in ways that change intergenerational exchanges. Expectations across genders and generations can be filled with uncertainty and conflict along with solidarity and peacefulness (Connidis, 2001; Lüscher, 2004; Lüscher & Lettke, 2004; Lüscher & Pillemer, 1998).

Isolation and Fear

A need for transportation by those living outside Veluvanna Village has caused a shift toward elders being homebound, engaging in temple participation solely on weekends, and infrequent trips to visit family, friends, or markets in patterns similar to those reported by Smith-Hefner (1999). One older woman, living in Fort Simon and caring for her young grandson, described how she had lost her freedom when she arrived in the United States. No longer able to walk to the temple, to markets, or to visit other elderly women, she feels trapped. She explained, "I am afraid to walk around my neighborhood. I don't know the people; they only speak English. They watch me when I walk so I am afraid." She stays inside her small frame home and only ventures into her fenced backyard an hour or so each day so her grandson can play. She is as suspicious of her non-Khmer neighbors as they are of her. She explained that, in Cambodia, she remembers her mother walking to visit other women, walking to the market, and feeling free to go into the forest to gather fruits. She is happy that she is in the U.S., but misses the ability to move about freely. "Here I have my grandson," she continued, "I make my daughter and her

family happy; I pray to Buddha. I am peaceful inside with my small family. Next time [in her next life] maybe I can be free, too.”

Outside Veluvanna Village, it is more difficult for elders to achieve the level of freedom they expect. Elders, such as the woman described above, limit their interactions with non-Khmers because of language difficulties and what they perceive as suspicious looks from neighbors. The expectations of elders for a life spent visiting family and friends, being surrounded by grandchildren, spending time in the temple, and passing on Khmer traditions through example and storytelling are difficult to achieve. Opportunities for intergenerational exchanges shrink to reach only those within close proximity. Although professing her happiness at helping her small family, she also feels the negative effects of isolation and her loss of freedoms many elders associate with old age.

Wisdom, Education, and Different Forms of Knowledge

Khmer elders often expect to impart wisdom to younger Khmers, perhaps one of the most revered intergenerational exchanges an elder may wish to provide. Through stories, they teach how one is to interact with others (Kaplan, 2002; Kim et al., 1991; Smith-Hefner, 1999). One elder living in Island Breeze described her frustration because of her inability to help her grandchildren. They “only know computers and don’t know Khmer [language] anymore,” she lamented. She feels she has lost her value as a source of information. She sees her role as respected elder shrinking toward becoming the “cook” and “watcher of the [grand] children.” She acknowledges that her oldest grandson, sitting nearby, is only interested in Khmer culture on special occasions such as New Year’s celebrations. Her grandson answered, “Why should I learn to read and write Khmer? It has no use here.” He continued his reasoned argument, “I’m better off spending my time learning computers. They [computers] will help me get better grades and a job. I know it is important to stay close to my family and be happy being Khmer. But, I need to move up.” His grandmother feels that her role is shrinking and may become lost. At the same time, her grandson sees his shrinking adherence to Khmer cultural traditions as freedom to “move up” in the American economic system.

Her fears may be placed within the context of a lost “web of family, culture, and history” (Detzner, 1996, p. 45), her displacement from Cambodia, limited language skills, and limited financial resources. Consequently, her knowledge holds less salience for the younger generation (Sokolovsky, 1997b). She and her family struggle to find balance between Khmer cultural traditions and America’s fast pace and reliance on advanced technology (Detzner, 1996, 2004; Smith-Hefner, 1998, 1999).

Straddling Two Cultures

Individuals who arrived in the United States as young adults are now entering old age. They often describe struggles they face as they straddle two remarkably different cultural systems. They strive to fit into American patterns of work and opportunity. They often encourage their children to adopt mainstream educational, work, and marital patterns while simultaneously grappling with their own desires to maintain a distinctively Khmer household and way of life. They seek to provide for their families with limited language skills and work skills that do not fit the needs of U.S. businesses so that they can assist their children's climb toward an American ideal of upward mobility. Prahm described his desire to make certain that Vuthy, his seventeen-year-old son, makes the best of both cultural traditions. Prahm explained:

I look at my son, he looks Cambodian but he wants to act American. He wants to go to the mall with other kids, wear the baggy clothes. Sometimes, I don't like it but our children must learn both systems. The Cambodian way will teach them right from wrong. The American way will teach them how to get ahead.

Anxiety over his son following American popular culture is apparent in his remarks. He is concerned over the clothing choices his son makes and worries that he may become "lazy and disrespectful," traits he associates with baggy clothes and "hanging out" at the mall. He primarily associates American culture with "bad" behaviors and has idealized Khmer culture. Any tensions he sees between himself and Vuthy are attributed to "American" influences—a pattern that creates a false dichotomy of "good culture versus bad culture" and may further undermine an open intergenerational exchange between Prahm and Vuthy.

Meng, the mother of three young women, expressed an analogous concern over her daughters following negative mainstream influences. She said:

I worry about our kids becoming too American. They will want to date boys and will wear short skirts. They speak more English than me so I don't always know what they are doing or saying.

Our children are getting away from us. How will they know what to do when they are parents when they don't want to listen to us now? They say we are about the old ways.

Our girls must learn the Khmer way but our boys are better learning the American way. That way, they can have a good life when they marry. The girls will take care of the home and the family and the boys will make the money.

Although she recognizes that children are "becoming too American" she also assumes that young Khmer women will, somehow, stay in more traditional gender roles. In spite of the reality that "our children are getting away from us," she holds hope that her daughters will follow the "ideal" Khmer woman's path of staying home and caring for family. Once again, just as

Prahm has idealized Khmer cultural traditions, she tends to see American influence as positive only when associated with economic (or educational) advancement and quite negative when viewing family relations. Younger Khmers express similar worries about the need to straddle cultures. Vuthy stated:

We have to learn how to be good Americans and good Khmer. That is not easy because our American friends go places but our parents don't trust us to go with them. We have to be American when we are at school and Khmer when we are at home. Sometimes we get confused and angry.

Later in our interviews, however, Vuthy also stated that blending both cultures was easy because his parents blended cultures. He felt he could be "50/50" Khmer and American. Remarks such as these were echoed by many younger Khmers. While acknowledging the importance of following Khmer cultural values, they also acknowledge the need to shift behaviors depending on whether they are with Khmer family and friends or with non-Khmer friends. Similar to the mother who was torn between being Khmer and being American, younger Khmers also grapple with knowing when and how much Khmer cultural values and American cultural values to embrace and display. Most are doing well in school, some are planning college careers. Others plan to follow their parents into the seafood extraction industry. Very few become involved in gang-like activities and those who do often find themselves rapidly surrounded by older extended family members who "love them back" into the fold. A geographic scattering of children, whether for educational or work opportunities, however, has led some elders to express concern over their own place within an extended family.

Left Behind

Some elders worry that limited ability to pass on material wealth, such as land or other material resources, will cause their children to embrace American independence, become too busy working, and leave elders behind and alone. Knodel and colleagues (1995) report a similar worry among Thai elders whose children seek jobs away from home and come to devalue the meager holdings of their elders. Others, such as Becker and Beyene (Becker, 2002; Becker & Beyene, 1999), describe elders as living in a liminal position because of loss of social position. One Khmer woman, living in Fort Simon, described how she had nothing to offer her children because she had arrived with "only a yellow envelope saying I can come. All other things I leave in Cambodia. Here I have, I am, nothing." Because she feels that her traditional way of living and passing on "Khmer wisdom" is no longer valuable to younger Khmers in the United States, she has lost her identity as a sage and is struggling to find a way to remain important in her family's daily lives.

Khouy and Moli expressed comparable fears of their children leaving them behind because of their oldest daughter and her husband's decision to move into a single family home rather than wait until the extended family could move together. Khouy asked, "What are we to do? When we raise our children to embrace American education should we then become sad when they act like Americans?" He continued:

We can only hope they will remember the things we teach them about Khmer family life. I have no land to give her, no big house for her children. Here, we are one family to each [bed]room. Me and my wife, my oldest daughter and her husband and three children, Vanna, her husband and new baby. We are noisy. We are people everywhere. We have to let them go their own way and accept that they like American way of one family, one house. Maybe Vanna and her husband move too. Then, what do we do when we get sick? Maybe American nursing home?

However, in spite of their concerns, such as the seemingly status-lowering circumstances described by other researchers (Dinh et al., 2000; Foner, 1997; Kauh, 1997; Keovilay et al., 2000; Kim et al., 1991; Kim, 1999; Pyke, 2000; Smith-Hefner, 1998, 1999; Strumpf et al., 2001) Khouy, Moli, and other elders remain integrated in extensive family networks. Their concerns, however, may be quite valid as children continue to embrace a notion of upward mobility and independence.

Strength

Regardless of the stresses associated with disjunctions between Khmer cultural values and mainstream American values, families in each of the three communities represented in this study are maintaining strong intergenerational relations. Elders are surrounded by family or are engulfed in kin-like networks. Unlike young Khmers described by Smith-Hefner (1999), teens and young adults in each of the three communities represented in this study tend to reject gang membership. Many parents report having heard of or known families whose children join gangs, but, as one mother said, "here, we have less worry because we all watch for each other." Another father supported her remarks by saying, "as soon as we see some problem with our children, we love them back into our ways." There are strong ethics within each community that provide firm foundations for maintenance of traditions associated with filial piety; although, those traditions are being recast and redefined within the context of a mixed cultural milieu.

Adapting to Life in the United States

Traditions and Tensions

The conviction to maintain a tradition of filial piety and tensions brought about through dissonant cultural ideologies have led many families to find creative strategies that allow them to

fulfill intergenerational obligations within the context of life in the United States. As the preceding narratives show, the requirement for wage-based work creates the greatest need to redefine “appropriate” ways of interacting across generations. Local knowledge and interpretations govern adoption and acceptance of modified behaviors. In many families, providing assistance through financial contributions has overtaken providing assistance through daily instrumental or affective interactions.

Other residential or technology-driven strategies have arisen because of circumstances surrounding life in the United States. There is a shift from multigenerational housing to clustering in neighborhoods or purchasing adjacent houses. Reliance on telephones for daily contact or video-taping messages are other ways families remain connected across distances and provide additional avenues for intergenerational exchanges. What is given, received, and repaid as a way to fulfill obligations associated with intergenerational exchanges also have undergone varying degrees of change.

Gaining an education has taken priority over day-to-day assistance. Financial assistance may be used as a way to fulfill obligations to family and community through remittances or contributions to the temple. Older Khmers, who, if they had remained in Cambodia, would likely have provided land and housing to younger family members, now live with younger family members. Most elders cannot acquire landholdings on the limited finances associated with part-time work in the seafood industry or other unskilled job markets or the few hundred dollars provided through Supplemental Security Income. Histories and age become more apparent in discussions of adaptations; therefore, I have divided the following narratives by age groups to aid in understanding interpretations of appropriate intergenerational exchanges.

Education: Age 15 through 24

Good Children

Moving up the economic ladder in the United States often depends upon acquiring an education and being technologically savvy (Foner, 1997; Hurh & Kim, 1984; Kim et al., 1991; Smith-Hefner, 1999). Many of the young Khmers I interviewed place a high priority on school and on technology in the form of computers and cell phones. Although all speak Khmer, very few have undertaken learning to read and write Khmer. One young man remarked that he likes “American technology” because he knows he can use it as a bridge to take himself and his family out of near poverty. At the same time, he also acknowledges the growing distance between what his parents and grandparents expect and what he, as a dedicated university student, can provide. He said, “I know I can’t see my family all the time because of school. So, I call them on my cell

phone once or twice a day. That way, they know what I am doing and that I still care about them.” He acknowledges that his phone calls do not take the place of being available to help them, but he feels that his frequent calls are an appropriate way of showing his reverence for older family members.

Kiri, a 22-year-old university student from Fort Simon, plans to show her parents how grateful she is for the opportunities they have provided by purchasing them a new house once she has completed her studies and is working. She explained her family’s pattern of education.

Everybody in my family works. Us kids all go to high school or college. Before, maybe kids would just do things around the house for the parents. Now, we get good educations so we can buy them things they need.

Kiri understands that she must reconfigure ways she shows respect and fulfills filial obligations. She also recognizes that she will be physically unable to attend to her parents’ needs on a daily basis. She hopes that her education will allow her to provide financially for her parents but also expressed concern that she may need to move away because of limited opportunities for jobs in her chosen field. She does not yet know how she will find a way to maintain the traditions associated with filial piety but feels she has time before she must act.

Good Sons

Seng, in *Island Breeze*, reinterprets day-to-day obligations within the context of long-term benefits. Soon, he will be leaving *Island Breeze* for a university in a neighboring state. While attending the university, he will live with a local Khmer family. He explained, “Our family does a lot for us so we can concentrate on school.” He admits that his fulfillment of filial obligations will change from what his own parents provide. He remarked:

We won’t be able to give our parents the kind of care they give our grandparents because we will have professional jobs. But, that’s okay because, with our jobs, we can afford to buy them a big house so we can all live together.

He recognizes that changes are necessary. His parents’ pattern of providing daily care to his grandparents in the form of food and companionship will shift toward providing for his own parents through increased ability to purchase household help. At this time, he reports that he expects to live in one large home with his parents, grandparents, and his siblings and their future spouses and children. He expects his sisters to contribute toward collectively purchasing a large home for their extended family. Seng’s relations with his family and the living arrangements he will have while living away constitute a matrix of family helpers (Riley & Riley, 1996) who provide according to Seng’s needs. However, gender differences also influence who will live together (Metha et al., 1995). Seng and his family expect Seng’s sisters to adhere to traditions, such as arranged endogamous marriages and to willingly accept family care responsibilities by

remaining physically and psychologically close. Marriage arrangements following a pattern of endogamy serve as a way to enforce traditional Khmer cultural ideology in future generations and may place an additional strain in intergenerational relations between young women and their families.

Good Daughters

A foundational expectation that daughters will be the primary caregivers of their frail parents and accept arranged marriages (Kato, 2000; Knodel et al., 2000; Zimmer & Kim, 2002) still continues; however, it is becoming common for marriages to be arranged through more distant Khmer families. Marriages arranged across great distances may create conflict within families. Sarana, an 18-year-old woman whose family has recently arranged her marriage to a man who lives in a distant state, worries that her husband may not want to reside in her family's home. Although her marriage is several years away, she expressed her concerns regarding co-residence with her husband and parents. She said:

I want to live with my parents when I marry, but, what if my husband wants to live like an American family? I don't want to hurt my mom and dad. It's hard to leave the old ways but, sometimes, we just have to.

Tensions, such as expressed by Sarana regarding her marriage into a distant family, also may be felt by individuals from across the United States who, through arranged endogamous marriages, find themselves leaving their families to move into the more rural communities described in this dissertation. Even marriages arranged between young adults living in the United States and young adults living in Cambodia are likely to include tensions and turmoil associated with cultural dissonance. Each marriage partner may find her- or himself with an unmet expectation of an "easy" life in the United States. On the one hand, the marriage partner from Cambodia may be expecting an idealized gendered pattern of stay-at-home wife caring for a wage-earning husband. While on the other hand, the marriage partner from the United States may expect an economic partner who also fulfills both Khmer and American patterns of support and intergenerational relations, a burden that is especially acute for a woman whose marriage was arranged in Cambodia but whose residence is the United States.

Shifting Traditions

Khmer cultural ideology dictates that the wishes of women, like Sarana, take a secondary role to those of their husbands. Men, such as Seng, on the other hand, can choose to purchase a home for an extended family and expects parents, grandparents, and sisters to live with him. As long as Seng's sisters are not married or their husbands agree, it is likely that they will follow Seng's desires, especially if Seng's earning power is greater than that of his brothers-in-law. In

this case, Seng's economic prowess will overturn the age-defined hierarchy of his grandparents' and parents' authority. Although Seng's family (with Bun as the patriarch), could be classified as resilient according to the typology set forth by Detzner (1996, 2004), shifts in power as Seng's economic status outpaces that of his parents could cause conflicts to arise. It is likely that underlying the solidarity displayed by Seng's family, there are tensions associated with the inversion of the age hierarchy associated with traditional filial piety. Regardless of interactions with mainstream American cultural ideology; however, the strength of conviction to follow traditional intergenerational exchanges within this Island Breeze family may allow continued solidarity and maintenance of a strong, though dynamic, ethnic identity.

Hareven and Adams (1996) describe a similar circumstance whereby premigration beliefs and behaviors, life histories, and cross-cultural interactions inform levels of dependency across generations. Even with changing life circumstances such as loss of economic power by elders and educational gains by younger family members, Bun, Seng, and their family expect to continue traditions associated with filial piety and have accepted the need to modify both expectations and behaviors. The expectation that earning power will follow a college education is not always the case for mainstream American students. It is yet to be seen if the economic opportunities envisioned by younger, college-bound Khmers will be realized and if they will have the economic resources to purchase housing, automobiles, and technology necessary to fulfill what they see as "appropriate" reconfigured patterns of fulfilling familial obligations.

Growing Families: Age 25 through 39

Seeking Success

Although many of the adults in this age category (25 through 39) were born in Cambodia, most have come of age in the United States. They were raised, however, in families still struggling to find a place within American society and, for the most part, in families still adhering to traditional beliefs and behaviors surrounding intergenerational exchanges. Most adults in this age group are fluent in both Khmer and English but only a few can read and write in Khmer, having lived in Cambodia during wartime with few opportunities for formal education. Marriages among this age group often were arranged by their families. These Khmer regularly exhibit the greatest ambivalence about adapting to changes in intergenerational exchanges. They express more anxiety than either their younger counterparts or their elders. What is difficult to capture in this study is the pensiveness with which they describe ways they have used to adapt traditional practices to fit within the social and cultural disjunction between Khmer and American cultural ideologies.

Vong, who frequently moves in and out of Veluvanna Village following employment opportunities, philosophically stated the following:

Life brings lots of changes. Khmer people have had to learn to adapt since we had to leave our country. We can keep our traditions in our home but we have to act American to the outside world. Otherwise, we will always be poor and have nothing.

Each time Vong, his wife and children return to Veluvanna Village, his family celebrates. Each time he moves away, a farewell dinner is prepared. Perhaps the most stretched and ambivalent of all age groups, Vong and his contemporaries struggle to find a way to “fit” both cultures, often balancing work and childcare with obligations surrounding reverence and respect to parents and older family members. Vong indicates that his ability to find work is how he shows respect to his father. “If I don’t work, what does that say to my papa? That he raised a no good son?” When Vong begins to feel that he is letting his father down by holding a low-wage job, he moves his family to another city in hopes of (finally) attaining a “good” job with a wage that will allow him to begin repaying his father for earlier assistance.

Success in the workplace also provides ways for young adults to blend both cultural traditions. One 38-year-old man described his ability to help the entire community, especially elderly women who live alone in Veluvanna Village. Although he no longer lives in Veluvanna Village, having purchased a large home near Fort Simon, he maintains near-daily contact through his involvement with the Buddhist temple. He described how his role as respected leader was accelerated as a consequence of his financial success:

In Cambodia, what was important was participating in Buddhist ceremonies. I do that here; I learned about them from my papa and older uncles. Usually a man must wait until he is older [to provide for the temple as he currently is able to do]. Because I have a good business, I can help with ceremonies for the whole village.

He has used his success in the American business world as a way to provide food, transportation, and housing for a large number of Khmer families. Although he does not often participate in the physical work of assistance, his financial contributions make a significant difference for many families. Similar to Seng (who is just starting his advanced education), this 38-year-old man is fueling a shift from a male-centered, age-based power hierarchy to an economics-based power hierarchy similar to the shift in power described by Detzner (2004) when younger family members’ earnings outpace older workers earnings.

Finding Time to Be Khmer

The need to work, often at jobs that begin before dawn and continue late into the afternoon and evening, constrain many young adults’ ability to participate in ceremonies that

follow the Khmer lunar calendar instead of the Gregorian calendar familiar to most Americans (Smith-Hefner, 1998). Participation in ceremonies, especially by Khmer families living in Fort Simon and Island Breeze, often is relegated to weekends. This truncated pattern of participation among the groups in this study is comparable to behaviors Smith-Hefner (1998) describes concerning Khmer families living in Massachusetts. One 32-year-old woman who lives in Island Breeze expressed her feelings about living away from other Khmer families because of her job.

It would be nice if we lived near more Khmer families. But here, we have better chance at jobs. Our children have better chances at schools. Not so much everybody works in crab.

The trade is that we get lonely for other Khmer. So, we travel to the village whenever we can. The kids like playing in the village but they like coming home too. Family is still number one. But work takes so much time that we have to schedule time with our family.

The best way is to do things together. When we all cook together, we can talk about what is important. Now, with everyone working, we can only cook together on special days. That is when we wear our sarong made of old beautiful silk and sit on platforms talking and catching up.

When we go home, its back to jeans and back to work.

Her remarks reveal her simultaneous willingness and regret at living away from other Khmer families. She recognizes the trade-off of maintaining distant relations with her extended family—fewer opportunities to interact, to catch up on news, and to share in familiar traditions such as wearing silk sarongs and cooking on outdoor platforms. She also recognizes the opportunities she gains: to move out of the hard work and drudgery of crab processing into a “good, clean job working in a health center” where she has the prospect of advancement. Still, she longs for the days of cooking together so she can sit and visit with other Khmer women. Her final remark, “its back to jeans and back to work” show her resignation of the loss of a more traditional gender-defined role, including that of communal cook, and her acceptance of her new role as a working wife and mother in the United States separated by physical distance from other Khmer. Part of her discomfort also may arise from the disproportionate expectation that women should be primary purveyors of cultural traditions. She is simultaneous pulled in one direction as a financial contributor to her family’s well-being and in another direction upholding traditional Khmer ideologies. Carrying culture forward while adapting to American patterns of set hours for work and upward mobility creates burdens few women can comfortably bear without experiencing considerable strain.

Separated or Lost Families: Age 40 through 60

Redefining Identities

The most common thread running through the narratives of this age group is separation and loss of family members. Both topics are given considerable attention in the literature dealing with refugees' lives (Boehnlein, 1987; Boss, 2002; Braun & Nichols, 1997; Carlson & Rosser-Hogan, 1994; Detzner, 1996, 2004). Already having moved into adulthood in Cambodia, the poignant narratives provided by Khmers in this study merely touch the surface of the extent of their losses. Parallel to reports throughout the literature, many family members were lost to Pol Pot's army, to diseases, injuries, or to starvation. Others were separated and sent to different camps; eventually, many were relocated to different countries. Most of the individuals I interviewed in this age group color their narratives with stories of adaptation. They describe strategies for adapting to the loss of family members, the loss of an already-established identity, and the recognition of the need to quickly adapt to the new cultural milieu as a refugee in the United States. Their narratives resonate with the same cacophonous sound of disruption found in stories reported by Smith-Hefner (1998, 1999), histories offered by Chandler (2000) or Kamm (1998), and in personal narratives of anguish, escape, and recovery given by Szymusiak (1999) and Ung (2000).

Having lost nearly all her family in Cambodia, Chea, who moved to Island Breeze twelve years ago to be near her "adopted" Khmer family, described her experiences fleeing the Khmer Rouge and recalls how she redefined her own needs when she arrived safely in the United States. Chea and her infant daughter were sponsored by an American family living in Pennsylvania. Alone and without language skills, she was determined to provide a good life for herself and her daughter. As her daughter grew into adulthood, she began to long for an extended family such as she had lost in Cambodia. She said:

When I lost my family in Cambodia, I learned that I could be okay on my own. Now as I get older, it is harder to be alone. So, I have gotten closer to my uncle's family. I go there for dinners and celebrations.

They know I wasn't always part of their family but now I am and it is good for me and for them. It has helped me remember my ancestors and gives me peace.

She initially lived in a large city away from other Khmers until she learned of the small community of Khmers living in Island Breeze. Although she is very close to her sponsoring family and maintains contact through phone calls and visits, as she grew older she missed the strong connections found in Khmer families. Reuniting with other Khmers has provided her with a way to blend the independence she acquired living in Pennsylvania and supporting herself and young daughter with core ethnic values she acquired before leaving Cambodia. Her desire to

reconnect may be understood by considering her premigration experiences. Hareven and Adams (1996) suggest that the culture wherein one was raised informs the needs of the individual. In Chea's case, she felt the need to reacquaint herself and her daughter with a more traditional pattern of intergenerational exchange such as could be found through establishing an extended kin network with other Khmers. Chea also resists becoming fully immersed in traditional Khmer patterns of male-dominated households by maintaining a physical buffer zone between herself and the local Khmer community. She has resisted offers of arranged endogamous marriages and knows she is occasionally ostracized by married women who worry that she may want to "steal" their husbands. She is strong and resilient, however, and stands by her choices.

Making Choices

Chea has chosen to remain in a mixed ethnic neighborhood. She explained her reasons for that choice:

I think it is important to have friends who are not Khmer. We can become too narrow in our ways if we don't learn about others' lives.

I want to live away from other Khmer because they don't like that I have no husband. They want to know why I haven't remarried. I like my freedom. I have lots of friends. It isn't necessary for me to stick only with the Khmer way. The American way gives women more choices.

I like that. I still practice Buddhism everyday. I burn incense and meditate. But I don't want to live life confined to Khmer women's model.

Chea's choice to remain apart from other Khmers also reflects Liem's (1998) notion of traditional culture as constraining, especially for women. She has chosen to follow some aspects of traditional culture (burning incense, following Buddhist tenets, and engaging in intergenerational exchanges with her extended Khmer family) while adhering to other, more mainstream American traditions such as living alone. The type of cultural blending practiced by Chea is described by Hurh and Kim (1984) as cultural adhesion, or taking parts of each tradition to create a different, more acceptable, set of beliefs and behaviors. She has chosen those aspects of each culture that provide her with the greatest comfort while also providing her with privacy more attuned to an American pattern of engagement with others.

Choice as to where one lives is not always possible for refugees. Religious organizations often act as intermediaries in the resettlement of refugees. Khmer, and many other non-English speaking refugees, rely on such assistance for housing, transportation, jobs, and English language training. Although all Khmer I interviewed reported their religion as Buddhism, Christian organizations played a significant role in assisting their adaptation to life in the United States. Language skills, especially for individuals living outside Veluvanna Village, could mean the

difference in abject poverty and making a living wage. One man, living in Fort Simon, discussed his strategy for attending English language classes:

I needed to learn English so I became a Christian for a while because they would send a bus to take me to English class if I would pray in church. After I learned enough English, I changed back to Buddhism because, with Buddhism, I am part of the community.

His strategy, to convert to the religion of his sponsor in order to tap into English language classes, fulfilled two purposes. First, he was able to repay his sponsor by giving his time, the only commodity he had available, to attend their religious ceremonies. He also was able to learn English so he could become self-sufficient, which he views also as a type of repayment for their hospitality and assistance. Because reciprocity, across all exchanges, is a central tenet of Khmer traditional culture, his repayment was a moral obligation. Having repaid his sponsor's kindness, he was then free to return to his Buddhist roots. Learning English gave him a freedom to work and travel without the need for dependence on non-Khmer. Unlike exchanges with other Khmer, once he felt he had fulfilled his obligations to them, he truncated his exchange patterns with his Christian sponsors.

Maintaining Contact

Once within a receiving country's borders, secondary migration, which often involves moving to be closer to better jobs or to co-ethnic communities and families, such as in Chea's case described above, may occur. When families are scattered across several nations, however, migration to another nation is quite difficult and costly. Consequently, new strategies of intergenerational exchanges become common. Devi points out in the following comments that maintaining intergenerational exchanges such as would be expected if still living in Cambodia is quite difficult. Many Khmer families, however, preserve close intergenerational exchanges through phone calls and video tapes. During each day of my stay in her home in Veluvanna Village, Devi received and made numerous calls on her cell phone to family members all around the globe. Devi reports:

My family is all over the U.S., Canada, France, and Cambodia. When we lived in Cambodia, we were very close. After we left [Cambodia] we couldn't live near each other. The ones who live in the U.S. or, maybe, France, they send money to the ones living in Cambodia. Money isn't as good as living close by but what choice did we have?

Families separated by great distance often spend considerable time and money maintaining intergenerational exchanges. Exchanges, in the form of phone calls, gifts, or remittances, provide families with a sense of connectivity. News, gifts, or remittances are spread throughout communities and help support Buddhist temples in Cambodia. Just as in Veluvanna Village,

Buddhist temples serve as cultural centers and social support centers for families. Temples also serve as places for elders to gather to pass on traditional knowledge, whether that knowledge is religious, arcane, or mundane. Distance, however, changes how knowledge is transferred.

Consultations with elders, rather than taking place while seated on the floor sharing a meal of rice and vegetables, now may take place through conference calls and are important mechanisms for decreasing elders' isolation and loneliness. Unlike Korean immigrant elders living in an urban area, whom Kim (1997) describes as lonely and at risk for ill health, Khmer elders in this study are continuing their engagement across generations. The reality of adaptations such as embracing technology to maintain appropriate, though redefined, intergenerational exchanges, is common. Cell phones and video cameras are ubiquitous objects at gatherings. Families across great distances can hear the sounds of laughter, music, or chanting. Video tapes provide ways of "seeing" how children or grandchildren have grown or changed. They also provide a "receipt" to show that remittances have been delivered to distant families. Embracing parts of a new culture, such as that provided by technology, allows families across great distances to remain connected. Keeping other parts that contradict traditional beliefs and behaviors at bay, however, is proving to be more difficult.

Arranging Marriages: Finding Love

Although the Khmer families in this study maintain strong ties to other Khmer and to the Buddhist faith, many recognize that their children may not follow traditional patterns of acceptable behaviors. One pattern undergoing rapid change is parental and elder intervention in arranging endogamous marriages. Families interviewed in this study report that elders continue their involvement in arranging marriages, however, some young adults are not waiting for elders to decide on their marriage partners; instead, they initiate those arrangements themselves. Smith-Hefner (1999) also finds that family-arranged marriages are becoming increasingly rare in the United States.

Parents and grandparents, though sometimes resistant, are learning to accept the American pattern of romantic love and are modifying ways of "arranging" marriages to better suit the desires of their children through more Americanized patterns. Rather than parents or grandparents initiating the discussion of marriage, it is more often young adults themselves who approach their parents to begin the process. Huon, a 61-year-old man who lives in Fort Simon, happily reported that he had a "multinational family" that was established because of who his children met and married or expect to marry. He explained:

In Cambodia, it is easier to make marriages for your children. Here, children meet other people [non-Khmer] at school and want to date.

My married son has a wife from another [country], Japan, my oldest daughter's husband is Latino, and my next daughter is dating a Thai man.

Everyone respects the others' views and we all learn about the others' cultures. Pleased with his children's choices, he embraced multiculturalism within his family and "arranged" the marriages his children desired. He symbolically approached the prospective spouse's parents with an inquiry as to the interests of the family in forming a marriage agreement. However, he also lives outside Veluvanna Village where exogamous marriages do not cause the tensions that they do within Veluvanna Village. At the time data were gathered for this dissertation, there were no exogamous marriage partners living in Veluvanna Village. It is yet to be seen if a strict adherence to endogamous marriages will hold in the village or if families will begin to accept "outsiders" into the fold.

Other parents, however, do not express joy; instead, they reluctantly adapt to the idea of romantic love in light of the possibility that their child may find increased opportunities for succeeding in mainstream American society. One mother, whose daughter wants to marry a young man she met while visiting relatives in a large Northeastern city, lamented:

My daughter is marrying an America man from another state. I want her to stay here with me but she will have more chances to get a better life if she leaves. She will still love me and burn incense for me and for her ancestors even if she is far away.

Her remarks illustrate her ambivalence in her daughter's choice. She is willing to accept what she believes is best for her daughter while also accepting what she views as her own loss in future daily interactions with her daughter. She recognizes that her daughter may have a better economic life by moving away from Veluvanna Village, but worries that her daughter may experience loneliness because of the social isolation from other Khmers. She also recognizes how difficult it will be to maintain the closeness she and her daughter share. On the other hand, she acknowledges that her daughter's choice is not a rejection of her parents' love. Still others refuse to adapt and, when children choose non-Khmer spouses, those children may find themselves removed from the embrace of the village. Questions regarding a missing son or daughter often were met with brief explanations that those children had refused to follow elders' advice and were making their own way in America.

Who We Were: Who We Are

Many Khmer families, such as those described above, not only adapt to American culture but also adapt to changing family structure. Chea adapted to life in the United States after the loss of most of her family in Cambodia, by moving closer to her adopted family. She maintains her independence, however, by living in a mixed-ethnic neighborhood away from other Khmers.

Huon and his multicultural family adapted by learning about each others' cultures and traditions and remaining involved with traditional Khmer culture at a brief distance outside Veluvanna Village. Still others adapt through reluctant acceptance of the need to maintain a type of intimacy at a distance such as described by Hareven and Adams (1996).

Other families are struggling to adapt to losses because of a secondary migration by their children who are in search of job opportunities. Stoller and Pugliesi (Stoller, 1998; Stoller & Pugliesi, 1988) describe family members, especially one's spouse or adult daughter, as primary caregivers; however, migration of family members changes the hierarchy of care. Without a daughter living in the United States, Prahm must rely on assistance from his daughter-in-law, Ny. Vong, Ny, and their children, however, regularly move in and out of Veluvanna Village as Vong searches for seasonal jobs. With Vong, his wife and children living far way, after Mai's death Prahm was left to rely on an extended network of kin and kin-like relations to help him emotionally with his loss. After a culturally acceptable 100 days past Mai's death, through Mok's assistance, Prahm began the process of remarriage to a Khmer widow.

Similar to networks described by Barnes (1954), Prahm's network operates beyond boundaries set by kin or proximity and includes members of the community and beyond who have engaged in long-term exchanges. He has assisted others in finding jobs, housing, and marriage partners. Because the moral obligation to give and receive is foundational and circular in traditional intergenerational exchanges (Rettig, 1985), Prahm can expect the amount of care he receives to reflect the amount of care he and any of his ancestors provided to others. Prahm's enormous network also is a reflection of his tendency to fill the role of a natural helper as described by Ikels (1986) whereby he acts somewhat as a cultural broker by tapping multiple parties in his exchange network.

Conversely, any burden one individual places on another, if not relieved, is thought to follow oneself or one's ancestors into the next life. Because of the need to refrain from burdening someone else, adults in this age group often talk about their efforts of trying to find a balance between reliance on distant children (for instance, Vong who lives away more often than he lives nearby) and establishment of alternate support networks, a pattern seen in both Mok's and Prahm's narratives and actions.

Parents recognize that, should they require that their children provide them with care, their children would sacrifice economic opportunities and jeopardize their own futures. Several individuals expressed their interest in American nursing homes. One 60-year-old man said that he did not want to bother his children when he became too frail to provide for his own care. He said "I don't want to hurt my kids' happiness. So, when I get old, I will go in nursing home." His

remarks were echoed throughout conversations with many 40- to 60-year-old Khmers. This age group, who might be considered the young old when following Khmer traditions of associating elder status with launching children into adulthood, seems more resigned to seeing their children move into an American way of life and are less expecting of traditional intergenerational exchanges in the form of day-to-day care. This age group also fits into the patterns described by Hareven and Adams (1996) whereby they bring with them a history of premigration beliefs and behaviors surrounding intergenerational relations that must be reconfigured within the context of social and cultural disruption brought about by war and relocation.

Facing Multiple Realities: Age 61 and Over

Changing Expectations

Many authors report that refugee elders recognize that the way of life they might have expected had they remained in their premigration country is not necessarily possible in the United States (Becker, 2002; Daniel & Knudsen, 1995; Muecke, 1995). Most elders in this study, however, are enmeshed in extended intergenerational networks that allow some semblance of a traditional way of life. Many elders often speak of ways younger family members are assisting them that do not follow a traditional pattern of behaviors but, nonetheless, fulfill obligations. For example, Mok, who has an extensive intergenerational network across all ages and across all three communities described in this dissertation, lives no less than 800 miles from his daughter, son, and their spouses and children—a fact that disturbs Mok but which he tends to downplay in his narratives.

Mok strives to maintain close relations with his children in spite of difficulties each has with balancing work, travel, and family obligations. He explained how his children provide care for him, “My son and my daughter live so far away. My son pays for my car but I don’t think I can live with him when I get too old to take care of myself.” Both children call often to see if he and their mother have any unmet needs. He accepts that his son’s way of showing respect is through the purchase of a car and through phone calls. However, the ambivalence is clear in his tone; he has not yet reconciled the “new” way of showing reverence with his more traditional values. He is especially disturbed that his daughter is not nearby to help with more personal tasks needed by Nahkrey and that she uses the telephone to maintain contact rather than moving into Veluvanna Village to be near her mother. Mok has modified his family structure in a way that is reminiscent of the latent matrix described by Riley and Riley (1996) or the reconfigured kin-like relations between Korean immigrants described by Kim (1999) to include what might be considered surrogate sons and daughters, nephews and nieces.

Having a latent matrix or a kin-like care structure allows Mok to care for his Alzheimer's stricken wife, Nahkrey. He is able to rely on a variety of others who can offer specific types of help according to his own and Nahkrey's needs. Because of the deep-held belief within Buddhism of reincarnation, these relationships are understood by Mok and others to transcend their lives. Mok continues to "repay" some of his moral debts and gain merit for his next life through arranging special "homework" partners with students who are struggling in schools. In spite of her progressive illness, Nahkrey also remains engaged in reciprocal exchanges by engaging in some limited food preparation and provides brief Khmer dancing lessons to young women across all three locations.

Outwardly, Mok accepts the absence of both his children and has redefined their contributions and remittances as suitable ways of showing respect. Mok expressed that he does not expect them to come to his aid in everyday situations; instead, he is proud that each has earned a college degree and is financially independent. However, their absence from day-to-day exchanges and the disruption of what he considers acceptable intergenerational exchanges causes him sadness. His distress is similar to that described by Phinney and colleagues (2000). They argue that when immigrant families encounter differences across generations in defining appropriate intergenerational exchanges, tensions develop. In addition, Mok and his children may be considered to correspond to what Detzner (2004) calls separated families because they are unable to fulfill traditional roles for each other. Mok has compensated by expanding his latent matrix of kin and kin-like relations wherein he can offer extensive advice and assistance. His children compensate by lavishing Mok and Nahkrey with homes and automobiles. Neither is fully satisfied with ways they engage in exchanges, but, each tend toward resignation that they are doing the best they can under the circumstances.

Flexibility

One 83-year-old woman, who, along with her husband, lives with a granddaughter, tells a similar story regarding separation from her daughter. However, she is experiencing less ambivalence than Mok because of her willingness to remain flexible in her expectations. She describes how her children take care of her needs in spite of their living a considerable distance apart. She said: "I call my children everyday. One is paying for this house. Another is paying for my husband's car. They can't be here with me but they take care of me and my husband anyway." She, in turn, provides care and companionship to her granddaughter and great-grandchildren. She is satisfied with ways she and her husband have adapted to their roles as dependents. Rather than living a more leisurely life as she might have expected to live in Cambodia, where she assumes she would have been surrounded by grandchildren and great-

grandchildren who would have provided for her, she has defined her own role as caregiver to her great-grandchildren as an appropriate way to remain engaged in intergenerational exchanges. Unlike the tensions described by Phinney and colleagues (2000) and experienced by Mok, she has redefined her own expectations to fit her changing life circumstances. Her attitude fits within a framework of resiliency (Detzner, 2004) because she has remained flexible in adapting to life in the United States.

Summary

Resiliency and Tenacity

Resilience and tenacity in the face of massive social and cultural disruption can be found in many of the preceding sections on filial piety, cultural dissonance, and adaptations. Most Khmer families, across all ages and in each community, have demonstrated their ability to adapt to changing life circumstances that have led to massive social and cultural dissonance. Although behaviors do not always conform to a traditional behavioral pattern and there are certainly varying levels of tension among family members, most families have found ways of adhering to basic tenets of traditional filial piety while living within the context of life in the United States. Many families have modified both their expectations and actions surrounding types and meanings of intergenerational exchanges—some more willingly than others. People of all ages agree that respect for elders, ancestor veneration, and obedience continue to define their lives. In each section, evidence of adaptations also is evident. Younger Khmers are shifting their understandings of “appropriate” ways of showing respect and obedience. Elder Khmers, likewise, have redefined their own and younger family members’ roles to better fit within the shifting cultural milieu of traditions and changes. Across generations, narratives are a mix of positive and negative feelings, tensions and solidarity, and varying degrees of adaptation.

A realization that life in the United States requires different configurations of intergenerational exchanges also dominates narratives. Most of the children spoke of continued filial piety and continued intergenerational exchanges in spite of the reality of long days working outside the home, often in low-wage jobs, marriages that require relocation, and demands of spouses and children. Younger family members acknowledge the debt they owe to parents and grandparents and state their intentions to repay those debts—not through time, as might be a more traditional approach, but through better multigenerational housing or other financial contributions. Most of the elders also spoke of continued filial piety; they seemed more willing to accept younger family members’ time limitations associated with economic advancements and the shift of their own status toward living as dependents rather than as the economic heads of

extended households. Perhaps their acceptance is an artifact of the length of time they have lived in the United States and their observations that a “traditional” pattern is not sustainable.

Beliefs and behaviors that follow a traditional ideology of filial piety are reflected in each of the preceding narratives. Reports of ancestor veneration, elder reverence and obedience, and acknowledgement of the debt owed to elders were woven throughout Khmers’ remarks. The Khmer way of life was often described as peaceful or calming. There were no differences in sentiments surrounding traditional filial piety beliefs by location, age, or gender. Observed behaviors also reflected adherence to a tradition of filial piety. It was common to see younger Khmers taking food to older Khmers who were not able to attend some ceremony or celebration. Even very young children would momentarily pause to greet elders in a hands-together head-slightly-down greeting before running off to play.

Throughout my interactions in all three communities, intergenerational exchanges and respect across ages was the norm. Younger Khmers spent considerable time making certain that older Khmers were comfortable—whether that meant providing food, a home, or conversation. Elders, likewise, acknowledge their responsibilities to teach and nurture younger Khmers (and one younger American researcher) so that a traditional Khmer family life was understood, embraced, and preserved. Across all ages, family members tell similar stories of care, respect, and assistance. Subtle shifts in what is considered “appropriate” relations, however, can also be heard in their narratives.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION
Water Falling Drop by Drop Eventually Wears a Hole in a Rock
(Khmer Proverb)

As the families represented in this dissertation have revealed, remembrances tie people, ideology, practice, and place together into a latent matrix of kin- and kin-like relationships within a community that twists and turns across time and space. Physical and symbolic surroundings and connections with families serve as a safe haven for retention of those aspects of life that are important components of Khmer culture (i.e., Buddhism, filial piety, and collectivity) while also allowing adhesion of mainstream American cultural traits that allow economic advancement (i.e., education and mobility). Khmer families' physically and symbolically constructed community of relationships also provide "buffer space" (Fitchen, 1991, p. 251) from what many Khmer families perceive as the rise of impersonal, disconnected lives resulting from living in a dramatically different cultural milieu than that of Cambodia. Those connections and buffer spaces, however, do not keep intergenerational exchanges from the influences of cultural dissonance. Slowly, Khmer families are adapting both their beliefs and behaviors in response to realities of life in a remarkably different culture than many might have expected had war not torn them from Cambodia.

This study of families who find themselves living in a society not necessarily of their choosing, a society with dramatically different foundational beliefs and behaviors surrounding expectations within family relations, has revealed multiple ways that families adapt. Adaptations, however, vary across ages. The cultural ideologies of individuals who spent significant time in Cambodia tend to follow notions of collectivity, ancestor veneration, and filial piety; cultural ideologies of individuals who have spent most of their lives in the United States; on the other hand, tend toward individuality, autonomy, and youthfulness. Bringing these disparate cultural ideologies together at their most fundamental level has resulted in considerable cultural dissonance. As is apparent in the preceding narratives, reconciling such cultural dissonance has led to multiple and diverse changes across generations in behaviors and in modification of beliefs surrounding family relations and intergenerational exchanges. In addition, changes have led to tensions that over simmer beneath the surface as families continue to find ways to adapt.

Family Exchange Theory

This study also provides insights for the development of family exchange theory. The French school of social exchange theory provides a good foundation for exploring intergenerational exchanges by considering collective beliefs and behaviors without assuming that individual actions and thoughts were inconsequential; however, it did not allow a broad

enough consideration of history, constructed knowledge, meanings within exchanges, and intergenerational ambivalence. Intergenerational exchanges are better understood within the context of life histories and individual and collective meanings assigned to those experiences, therefore, active meaning-making through adaptation of constructive theoretical perspectives also was an important consideration in the synthesis of family exchange theory. Family exchange theory, in addition, provides a template for asking how exchanges occur and what those exchanges mean to participants thus allowing better questions regarding intergenerational relationships in the context of non-normal events. Beliefs and behaviors surrounding filial piety are evident throughout Khmer families' narratives as are the push and pull of adaptation that leads to intergenerational ambivalence, for this reason, family exchange theory also incorporates aspects of an intergenerational ambivalence conceptual framework into its core concepts.

Similar to Khmer families interviewed by Smith-Hefner (1999), Khmer families interviewed for this study strive to provide a moral base for intergenerational interactions and exchanges. A gradual shift in what are considered "appropriate" intergenerational exchanges eventually wears away at traditions—even those that appear solid and rock-steady. Small changes in types and meanings of exchanges reconfigure family relations and cause ambivalence as each generation grapples with finding ways to fit Khmer and American ideologies together. At the beginning of this study I asked how families negotiate or modify intergenerational exchanges conducted within a framework of filial piety within the context of massive social and cultural disruption. I wanted to understand the influence of cultural dissonance on intergenerational exchanges among families living in a mono-ethnic community. Answers to these questions are not easy because there are many ways Khmer families have adapted, redefined, and reinterpreted types and meanings associated with interacting across generations and across geographic space. Foundational to intergenerational relations among the families described in this dissertation, moral education reaches across multiple generations to provide the structure for a redefined U.S.-configured Khmer society. Family exchange theory helps explain how and why intergenerational exchanges are not only about transfer of tangible or intangible goods and services but are also about continuity, collectivity, and adaptation.

Central Concepts of Family Exchange Theory

Central underlying concepts of family exchange theory are that individuals and collectives engage in exchanges without a necessary expectation that they will receive repayment for that exchange within their own lifetimes. There is, however, the expectation that the collective will benefit and, at times, exchanges also will have individual benefits. Family exchange theory has as an underlying concept that individual and collective histories inform and

are informed by meanings within exchanges. Meanings are not static with family exchange but change with the collective consciousness to create and reinforce bonds and provide moral guidance. With changes in type and meaning of exchanges, ambivalence becomes common. With greater degrees of change come greater degrees of ambivalence until types and meaning are reconfigured according to families' social and cultural context.

The key concepts of particular interest to researchers are the types of exchanges that occur across family relationships, the meanings understood as contained within exchanges, and the ambivalence experienced across the exchange network. It is also important to consider why and how those exchanges meet the expectations of the exchange participants according to both givers and receivers. Exploring and assessing these concepts takes place by including multiple members of the exchange network in interviews and observations. It is important to move beyond biological definitions of "family" to discover constitutive kin and kin-like networks that create the latent matrix of relationships. Moreover, family exchange theory requires investigation of multiple perspectives associated with intergenerational exchanges to establish not only how the current exchange is viewed as fulfilling family obligations, but also why particular patterns emerge, and how those patterns create intergenerational ambivalence.

In the next paragraphs, I return to the families' stories found throughout this dissertation to better illuminate ways that family exchange theory might be used and assist researchers in understanding intergenerational relations. For clarification, I have divided the three sections of this conclusion according to the three domains of family exchange theory; types of exchanges, meanings within exchanges, and intergenerational ambivalence associated with exchanges.

Types of exchanges

Intergenerational exchanges take many forms. They may be instrumental, such as found with several elders whose children provide material goods (for example, Mok's automobile from his son) or remittances (such as those Devi sends to her elder aunts and uncles in Cambodia). Other exchanges involve less obvious economic value and are more affective (such as those between Meng's mother and daughters). Other intergenerational exchanges may be more symbolic such as stories told by grandparents to grandchildren, for example, provide a way to pass on traditions while maintaining close intergenerational exchanges and building social solidarity (Rettig, 1985).

Exchanges may fit into more than one category. Exchanges, such as those between one elder, who provides care for her granddaughter and great-grandchildren, and her own daughter, who provides the elder with housing and transportation, are enduring (Mauss, 1950/1990), extend in all directions across generations, and encompass all three types. The grandmother provides

and receives care, love and affection, and veneration. She contributes significantly to the family's ability to earn wages and she provides continuity of Khmer traditions.

Driving elders to markets or the temple are common instrumental exchanges that have been reinterpreted across generations as acceptable ways of showing elder respect and veneration. An adaptive strategy of fulfillment can be found in the narratives of the young adult man who has succeeded in business. He maintains instrumental exchanges through contributions to the temple but sustains his emotional exchanges at a distance. Such intergenerational exchanges can be understood within the framework of each family member's life, collective histories, and reinterpretations of roles as family members seek adaptations that are consistent with needs (Lang, 2004).

Meanings within exchanges

No matter what type of intergenerational exchange, each holds particular and multiple meanings. For instance, no longer able to provide land or material goods, many elders have redefined companionship, care, traditional wisdom, and household assistance as gifts that pass from generation to generation (Fingerman & Hay, 2004). With each transfer, the giver adds to the collective soul of the gift (Mauss, 1950/1990) and to the collective continuity of Khmer culture, albeit a continually evolving Khmer culture.

Understanding reinterpretations of exchanges and roles is possible by considering events and histories of different members of the exchange network (Fingerman & Hay, 2004; Lang, 2004). Losses associated with war and resettlement; for example, serve as a catalyst for creating a new group identity that includes defining all Khmer as family. Although Kim and colleagues (Kim et al., 1996) assert that family ties may become weakened because of war or civil disruption, Lang (2004) argues that parent-child exchanges are adaptive and are reformed to suit changing needs. The statements and actions revealed in this study indicate a continuation of strong family ties and behaviors that reflect adherence to filial piety more in keeping with Lang's assertion of adaptability.

Because of massive losses, intergenerational ties and behaviors, interpreted through experiences of war and resettlement, led to an expansive meaning of "family." Families in this study engage in a blending of different individuals, according to mutual needs, similar to the latent matrix described by Riley and Riley (1996), to create a network of family-like relations. Families, now defined as encompassing all Khmer, not just those individuals who are biologically related or living under one roof or on one family compound, have assumed roles previously associated with biological connections, a reinforcement of the notion of adaptability posited by

Lang (2004). In addition, different recollections of traumatic events may lead to different interpretations of actions and behaviors.

A Khmer proverb, *In our own homes we each have one mother; in the jungle we all share the same mother*, helps to partially explain U.S. Khmers' expansive notions of "family." Each Khmer family I interviewed lost significant numbers of kin in Cambodia during the Pol Pot years and many more in the following years because of deprivations experienced in refugee camps. Reconstituting "family" by informal adoptions—across all ages—provides surviving Khmers with a way to re-weave and reassemble "family" regardless of biological relatedness, a pattern seen in Chea's connections with her adopted uncle and his extended family.

Ambivalence

Intergenerational ambivalence often can be found in intergenerational exchanges (Connidis, 2001; Lüscher, 2004; Lüscher & Lettke, 2004; Lüscher & Pillemer, 1998) amid the struggles and adaptations across situations and across relationships. Because histories color ways individuals interact and the expectations they have of themselves and others (Gubrium & Holstein, 1999; Halbwachs, 1952/1992; Holland et al., 1998), meanings within exchanges, whether instrumental, affective, or symbolic, shift and are redefined based on the particular histories, needs, and abilities of members of this diverse assemblage of Khmer families.

A close evaluation of narratives gathered for this dissertation reveals that within every interaction are positive and negative forces. The pull of independence may push against the desire to fulfill family obligations. For instance, ambivalence also can be seen in Vong's response to the stress and strain of life in the United States. His desire to fulfill obligations associated with filial piety and his quest for economic success in the United States are manifest in his cyclical migrations—he moves back to Veluvanna Village to be near and assist his father then moves away again in search of better opportunities, having felt he disappointed his father by taking a low-wage job. A similar pattern of ambivalence is found among numerous middle-aged adults; many spoke of strains associated with balancing multiple roles: work, childcare, temple, and tasks associated with elder respect and ancestor veneration. Solidarity also is apparent in intergenerational exchanges. Bun and his family are maintaining close exchanges through multigenerational living arrangements, frequent visits, and phone calls. Another example of solidarity is seen between the 83-year-old grandmother, who provides companionship to her great-grandchildren, and her family. She has accepted changes in her role that makes her more dependent on her family. Her ambivalence is diminished because of acceptance of her willingness to adapt to her new identity.

The permanence of intergenerational relations increases the possibility of ambivalence. Fingerman and Hay (2004) argue that discord from earlier problems can continue across the life span and that “residual emotional power” (p. 136) may influence intergenerational ambivalence. Their assertions are supported in these findings. Younger adults, especially those who arrived in the U.S. as young adults, described more struggles and were more troubled by their shifting roles. Older Khmer, on the other hand, were more willing to accept changes brought about by cultural dissonance and adapt to changing life circumstances. Older Khmers’ attitudes of acceptance also may be influenced by long-term Buddhist training that teaches acceptance of one’s plight as a consequence of one’s actions in a previous life. Younger family members continue to redefine themselves within the context of life in the United States whereas older family members are more comfortable with changes. Ambivalence, then, is felt differently across generations (Fingerman & Hay, 2004).

Among this group of Khmer families, a biological connection, though recognized and acknowledged, holds less salience than affective connections. Dependency shifts across generations according to hardships and wealth. Unlike Pillemer’s (2004) finding that continued dependency of adult children caused intergenerational ambivalence, in this study independence of adult children, rather than continued dependency, caused more ambivalence across generations.

Summary

Members of constructed families bring with them the experiences and histories particular to their own circumstances and particular to the length of time they spent in Cambodia, in refugee camps, and in the United States. Individual and collective histories inform ways each interacts with the other. Bringing all histories to bear on family creation, then, makes way for a reworking of the template that defines appropriate types and methods of exchanges for fulfilling obligations associated with filial piety. The newly created template provides guidance for conforming to expectations that, of necessity, are modified by experiences associated with the collision of extraordinarily different cultures.

The fabric of refugees’ lives described in this study interweaves, frays, overlaps, and holds strong. The warp and weft are an intricate assemblage of events, people, places, and times that are, all at once, part of present, past, and future lives. Physical and symbolic reconstruction of a complex Khmer “home place” in the form of Veluvanna Village provides one way for reconnecting, reconstructing, and redefining the composition of selves and families. Fitchen (1991) describes close-knit communities as repositories and referents for understanding and constructing identities and for defining “who and what we are,” (p. 245) a definition with particular salience for this group of refugees who are living in the context of social disruption,

cultural dissonance, and changing life circumstances. They have responded by constructing an existence, in the village and beyond, that blends multiple aspects of Khmer and American cultures (Foner, 1997; Hurh & Kim, 1984).

Extensive networks comprising kin- and kin-like latent matrices create a sense of belongingness and community. Certainly, living in the village provides easier access to the temple and provides a safety net of familiarity. However, it is apparent that proximity is less an issue than finding ways to bridge geographic divides through use of technology and creating pockets of communities wherever these Khmer families live. Inherent within intergenerational exchanges, when viewed through a family exchange theoretical lens, is the building of a collective consciousness (Durkheim, 1893/1984) that engulfs relationships in continuous cycles of spiritual and emotional connectivity (Mauss, 1950/1990; Rettig, 1985; Zafirovski, 2003). Also within family exchange theory is the notion of subjectivity and inclusion of multiple voices.

Although I explain intergenerational exchanges using family exchange theory, it is quite likely that use of another theory, when analyzing the same data, might yield a remarkably different dissertation. For example, a critical feminist perspective that focused on women's burdens as the keepers and conveyors of culture, as primary caregivers, and possible exploitation as they work in the seafood industry for very low wages, might explain some of the ambivalence apparent in women's narratives. It likely would reveal ways that women's simultaneous status as significant wage contributors and keepers of culture involve socially and historically constituted power relations that increase women's unease. In particular, a critical feminist prospective might also reveal a smoldering instability in their intergenerational exchanges and might place their lives within a framework of unrealized social justice. Although women's voices are not silent in this dissertation, a critical feminist perspective would bring their narratives to the fore, would help illuminate their multiple statuses, and would help to unsettle notions of a *status quo* patriarchy in their lives. I chose, instead, to develop and apply family exchange theory to understand and explain multiple domains of intergenerational exchanges. There are, however, several limitations that must be acknowledged.

Limitations to the Study

Methodological Limitations

Methodological limitations include the relatively small sample size of 31 individuals. Most were from very rural regions; only 12 were from an urban area. Even then, those 12 had created very "rural-like" environments made up of intensive gardens and spent a relatively large

amount of time in Veluvanna Village. As is common in qualitative research, it is difficult to generalize beyond the population studied.

Using a convenience sample also limited my interactions with Khmer families who do not remain engaged with the core community and its Buddhist temple. There are likely to be other Khmer families whose experiences of cultural dissonance have created different types and meanings surrounding intergenerational exchanges and who experience different levels of intergenerational ambivalence. Many of those families may not have been reached by me, perhaps because of their desires to live apart from other Khmers and to resist the dictates of filial piety. It is likely that, should I have been able to include families who resist inclusion in the Khmer communities described in this dissertation, I would have found more tension than was reported and observed in the families I describe.

In addition, my language skills can only be classified as a beginner. Although I was able to conduct interviews in Khmer, because of my limited vocabulary, it is very likely that more finely nuanced meanings may not have been fully understood by me. I attempted to overcome this limitation through use of an assistant and through returning to participants to confirm my initial understandings. Khmer people, in general, are extremely polite. It is possible that, even when I misunderstood some word or concept, they did not reveal to me my mistakes because of their politeness. A humorous example of their tolerance and polite acceptance was my mispronunciation of the complimentary phrase “this is delicious.” For several weeks, the women who provided me with food were, instead, told by me that the food “tastes like a cooking pot.” My host’s young son finally told me of my mistake and helped me correct my pronunciation. I am certain that other words and phrases, both spoken and heard by me, were similarly misunderstood. An additional language limitation is my inability to read French. Much of the historical literature on life in Cambodia is written in French, as a consequence of 19th and early 20th century France holding Cambodia as a protectorate, and has not been translated into English.

Another limitation is my outsidership. Although Khmer people in this study welcomed me into their homes and shared their narratives with me, there is little doubt that I only learned part of their stories. I had not experienced the massive trauma through which they had lived, so could not always identify with their plight. Because of my long-term engagement in the community, at times I recognized the more “public” version of their stories; however, there are likely to have been several times that I did not so recognize their narratives as tempered by what they thought were the “correct” answers to my questions. A good example of my outsider status influencing what I was told is Prahm’s original biologically-driven identification of his “family” because he assumed I might not understand the broader Khmer concept.

Finally, this study was conducted within a defined geographic region and, as previously mentioned, is predominately focused on rural families. Future research that includes comparative groups, either urban versus rural groups or across cultures, could further enhance our understanding of types, meanings, and ambivalence within intergenerational exchanges.

Theoretical Limitations

Family exchange theory is new. Some of its limitations may be overcome by continued use and refinement of family exchange theory with more testing of this theory across different groups. Another of its limitations is the need for intergenerational data that goes beyond an exchange dyad and reaches across several generations within the same family. In addition, it is important to include several families so that the influences of individual and collective histories may be considered. Without the views of multiple members of exchange groups, it is not likely that researchers will uncover meanings and ambivalence associated with intergenerational exchanges. The need for an inclusion of extensive webs of relationships also makes family exchange theory difficult to apply to quantitative studies because of the need to probe for meanings and ambivalence within exchanges. The development of a quantitative research instrument may prove to be too resource intensive for use by most researchers.

Contribution to Gerontology and Family Research

In spite of limitations in this study and in family exchange theory, this research contributes to the field of gerontology in two ways. First, it increases our understanding of ways minority immigrant families adapt to life in the United States. It shows how U.S. cultural influences can be both beneficial and detrimental to refugee and immigrant family relations and how families create new environments that allow both adaptation and continuity of desired culture traits. Second, it illuminates how theories can be combined to provide better explanations for refugees' intergenerational exchanges.

Family exchange theory should not be limited to minority immigrant families. Every family, across cultures, is subject to forces that create the need to adapt types and meanings of intergenerational exchanges. As the narratives of Khmer families in this dissertation show, types of intergenerational exchanges become accepted or rejected according to the particular mix of cultures (social, political, and historical) within which families exist. Moreover, varying degrees of ambivalence are experienced as expectations, beliefs, and behaviors change regarding intergenerational exchanges.

This dissertation has helped illuminate ways in which changed life circumstances and cultural transitions shape attitudes, preferences, and behavioral patterns associated with

intergenerational exchanges that fulfill obligations of filial piety among immigrant and refugee populations. It has added a new theoretical tool for investigating and understanding family exchanges. This dissertation also has shown how and why refugee families negotiated and modified beliefs and behaviors surrounding intergenerational exchanges in the context of massive social and cultural disruption. Life in a mono-ethnic community certainly influenced beliefs and behaviors surrounding filial piety. The more important component of Khmer families' lives in this dissertation, however, was the ability to hold onto those aspects of Khmer culture that were considered essential such as continuation of filial piety and elder reverence. At the same time, however, Khmer families adapted and redefined types and meanings of intergenerational exchanges to better reflect their current lives in the United States.

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APPENDIX

Intergenerational Reciprocal Exchanges among Refugees in the Context of Rural Poverty in the United States

In-Depth Interview Questionnaire

Khmer Family Relations in the United States
Interview Guide
Denise Clark Lewis (researcher)

Person interviewed _____

Date(s) interviewed _____

Consent for interview(s)	Yes	No	Verbal _____
Consent for photograph(s)	Yes	No	Verbal _____

If less than age 18:

Assent for interview(s)	Yes	No	Verbal _____
Assent for photograph(s)	Yes	No	Verbal _____

Parental consent for interview(s)	Yes	No	Verbal _____
Parental consent for photograph(s)	Yes	No	Verbal _____

Interview Code (1-60): _____

Family Code (A-F): _____

Place Code:	VV	FS	IB
-------------	----	----	----

VV=Veluvanna Village, FS=Area within 15 miles of VV, IB=Area more than 15 miles from VV

A. Demographic Information

Thank you for agreeing to talk with me about Khmer family life. I will begin with some general questions about your background.

A1. In what year were you born? _____

A2. Where were you born (city/village, district/province, country)?

A3. What do you consider to be your native language? _____

A4. Are you able to read and write in your native language? Yes No

Comments _____

Now I want to ask you about your education.

A5. First, I will ask about your education in Cambodia

A5a. How many years of school did you complete? _____

A5b. Did you receive any degree, diploma or certificate?

Yes (Specify) _____

No

A5c. What type of education was this? For example, technical, academic, etc.?

Now, I want to ask you about any education you may have received in the United States.

A6. Have you gone to school in the US? (Do not include classes in English as a Second

Language)

Yes No (if No skip to A7)

A6a. How many years of school did you complete? _____

A6b. What type of school was that? (for example, technical, academic, etc.)

A6c. Did you receive any degree, diploma, or certificate?

Yes (Specify) _____

No

A7. Did you take any English as Second Language (ESL) classes? Yes No

If yes, when and where? _____

Now I want to ask some questions concerning your current living arrangements and about your relatives.

A8. How long have you lived at your current address? _____yrs.

A9. Describe your current housing. Is it...

Housing especially for elders (# units ____)

Single-family detached house

Multiple dwelling house: Row, duplex, semi-attached

Apartment in house with one or more apartments (ea. Apt. has kitchen)

Boarding house, rented room(s) in house (no private kitchen)

Apartment building (# units)

Other (specify) _____ # units _____

A10. Do you own or rent your current home?

Own

(If own, skip to A11)

Rent

Other (If other, explain) _____

A11. How is your current housing like or unlike your housing in Cambodia?

A12. Do you live alone? Yes (Skip to A16) No

A13. How many people presently live (here) with you? _____

A14. Could you tell me who they are? (Please answer to the best of your ability, or give me your best guess.)

(For each person named ask:)

a. What is (her/his) first name? (full name if possible)

b. How old is (she/he)?

c. How is (she/he) related to you?

d. What is (her/his) marital status? (single, married, separated, divorced, widowed)

e. Is (she/he) working part-time, full-time, in school, unemployed, retired)

f. In what country was (she/he) born?

- g. (If refugee or immigrant) When did (she/he) arrive in the US?
 h. (If refugee or immigrant) Did (she/he) arrive with you? (yes/no)

a. Name b. Age c. Relationship d. Marital status e. Work/school f. Country of birth g.
 Date of arrival h. Arrived with respondent

1. Respondent _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Total no. in home _____

A15. Do you have any children who live outside your home?

Yes No (skip to A17)

A16. I have a few questions about the children you have who live outside your home.

(For each person named ask:)

- a. Gender (female/male)
- b. What is (her/his) first name? (full name if possible)
- c. How old is (she/he)?
- d. What is (her/his) marital status? (single, married, separated, divorced, widowed)
- e. Where does (she/he) currently live?

a. Gender b. Name c. Age d. Marital status e. Place of residence

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Confirm: Total # living children _____ No. living in the US _____

Confirm: Total # living children living elsewhere _____

A17. Do you have contact with other relatives not living in the household who live in the US?

Yes No (If no, skip to A19)

A18. Could you please tell me about the five relatives with whom you have the most frequent contact?

(For each person named, ask:)

- a. What is (her/his) first name?
- b. How old is (she/he)?
- c. How is (she/he) related to you?
- d. Gender (if not clear)
- e. What type of contact do you have? (phone, letters, visits; how often)
- f. Where does (she/he) currently live?

a. Name b. Age c. Relationship d. Gender e. Contact type & frequency

f. Place of residence

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

A19. You may have already told me this, but I need to confirm, what is your current marital status?

Married and living with spouse
Married and not living with spouse
Widowed
Separated
Divorced
Never married
(If never married skip to A20a)

A19a. How long have you been in your current marital status?

A19b. Could you tell me how many times you have been married and for how long?

Times _____ Duration of each marriage _____

A20. What relatives of yours remain in Cambodia? (if applicable: parents, children, grandchildren, siblings)

A21. Do you have relatives in countries other than the US or Cambodia? (who and where)

B. Immigration/Resettlement History (If born in the US, skip to B6)

B1. Where did you live before coming to the United States? (city/town/village, region/province, country)

B2. In what year did you leave Cambodia? _____

B3. In what year did you arrive in the United States? _____

B4. What is your current legal status in the United States? (give specific status: immigrant, refugee, US citizen, etc.)

B5. Who helped you (your family) with resettlement? (Did you receive any type of help from individuals or agencies in the US?)

B6. Since arriving in the US, where have you lived and for how long? (begin with first residence and end with present residence). Who lived in these residences with you (excluding current residence)?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- d. _____

B7. Why are you living in the Alabama (Florida, Mississippi) area?

B8. Why are you living in this neighborhood (village, town)?

B9. Before immigrating to the US, could you...

- a. read English:
Quite well
Just a little
Not at all

- b. write English:
Quite well
Just a little

Not at all

- c. speak English:
Quite well
Just a little
Not at all

C. Family Relationships

Now I would like to ask you some questions about the relationships within your family.

C1a. Taking everything into consideration, describe your relationship with your grandmother (if living).

(Pick one: Excellent, very good, good, fair, poor)

C1b. Taking everything into consideration, describe your relationship with your grandfather (if living).

(Pick one: Excellent, very good, good, fair, poor)

C1c. Taking everything into consideration, describe your relationship with your mother (if living). (Pick one: Excellent, very good, good, fair, poor)

C1d. Taking everything into consideration, describe your relationship with your father (if living).

(Pick one: Excellent, very good, good, fair, poor)

C1e. Taking everything into consideration, describe your relationship with your brothers and/or sisters (if living). (Pick one: Excellent, very good, good, fair, poor)

C1f. Taking everything into consideration, describe your relationship with your children (if living). (Pick one: Excellent, very good, good, fair, poor)

C2. What kinds of things do you talk about with your...

a. grandmother?

b. grandfather?

c. mother?

d. father?

e. sister(s)?

f. brother(s)?

g. daughter(s)?

h. son(s)?

i. granddaughter(s)?

j. grandson(s)?

k. daughter(s)-in-law?

l. son(s)-in-law?

C3. When you are together, what kinds of things do you do with your...

a. grandmother?

b. grandfather?

c. mother?

d. father?

e. sister(s)?

f. brother(s)?

g. daughter(s)?

h. son(s)?

i. granddaughter(s)?

j. grandson(s)?

k. daughter(s)-in-law?

l. son(s)-in-law?

C4. Describe the types of things the following family members do for you.

a. grandmother

b. grandfather

c. mother

d. father

e. sister(s)

f. brother(s)

g. daughter(s)

h. son(s)

i. granddaughter(s)

j. grandson(s)

k. daughter(s)-in-law

l. son(s)-in-law

C5. Describe other non-family, non-professional persons who do things with or for you.

Explain.

D. Assistance to and from Others

D1. Please name the persons whom you help in translating or interpreting (in either Khmer or English), personal tasks, such as shopping or transportation, cooking, laundry, childcare, or more intensive personal tasks (like help bathing, dressing, etc)?

(List each person named on the grid below)

(For each person named, ask:)

- a. What is (her/his) first name? (Full name if known)
- b. How is (she/he) related to you?
- c. How old is (she/he)?
- d. Is the person female or male?
- e. What type of help are you providing for this person?
- f. Does this person live with you?
- g. (If no to f) How far away does this person live from you?

a. Name b. Relationship c. Age d. Gender e. Type of help f. Live with you g. How far away?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

D2. Who are the people on this list who rely on you for assistance during a crisis or emergency?

D3. Are there other people who rely on you in times of emergency?

D4. Please name the persons who help you in translating or interpreting (in either Khmer or English), personal tasks, such as shopping or transportation, cooking, laundry, childcare, or more intensive personal tasks (like help bathing, dressing, etc)?

(List each person named on the grid below)
(For each person named, ask:)

- a. What is (her/his) first name? (Full name if known)
- b. How is (she/he) related to you?
- c. How old is (she/he)?
- d. Is the person female or male?
- e. What type of help are you providing for this person?

- f. Does this person live with you?
- g. (If no to f) How far away does this person live from you?

a. Name b. Relationship c. Age d. Gender e. Type of help f. Live with you g. How far away?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

D5. Who are the people on this list who you rely on for assistance during a crisis or emergency?

D6. Are there other people who you rely on in times of emergency?

E. Culture and Religion

Now I'd like to ask some questions about religion and about Khmer and American cultures.

E1. Were you raised in a particular religious tradition: If so, please tell me about it.

E2a. Do you currently practice a particular religion? Yes No (Skip to E4)

E2b. What religion? Could you tell me more about that?

E2c. Is this the same religion in which you were raised?

Yes (Skip to E3) No

E2d. Why was it that you changed your religion? Could you tell me more about that?

E3. What role does religion play in your life? (How important is that role?)

E4. How would you describe your cultural and national background?

E5. How would you describe the people who live in your present neighborhood?(Race/ethnicity/SES)

E6. If you moved, would you try to find a place where mostly Khmer people live? Yes

No

(Comments)_____

E7a. Do you think of yourself as an American? Yes No

E7b. Could you tell me more about that?

E8. How much contact do you have with others not of the Khmer community? What is the most frequent type of contact?

E9. Tell me about any things you do at home that connect you to your past or to Cambodia? (For example, the food you cook and eat, material objects in your home, music, newspapers or TV news broadcasts, Internet connections, etc.)

E10. Tell me about things you do (or do not do) in your home in raising your children (grandchildren) as Khmer living and growing up in the US.

E11. What kinds of things do you read in Khmer?

E12. What kinds of things do you read in English?

E13. How often do you watch American TV programs? What programs do you watch?

E14. Do you watch any programs in Khmer or from Cambodia, on TV, VCR, or DVD: What programs, tapes, or DVDs do you watch?

F. Income

F1. Now, I would like to ask you a few questions about your income. First, could you tell me or point to the letter on this page that best describes your total household income last year that you and others in your household received from all sources. In addition to salaries and wages, be sure to include pensions, alimony, child support, bank interest, SSI or welfare, Social Security, annuities, money sent to you from other(friends or family), and so forth.

- a. Under \$4,999
- b. \$5,000 - \$9,999
- c. \$10,000 - \$14,999
- e. \$15,000 - \$19,999
- f. \$20,000 - \$24,999
- g. \$25,000 - \$29,999
- h. \$30,000 - \$34,999
- i. \$35,000 - \$39,999

- j. \$40,000 - \$44,999
- k. \$45,000 - \$49,999
- l. \$50,000 - \$54,999
- m. \$55,000 - \$59,999
- n. \$60,000 - \$64,999
- o. \$65,000 - \$69,999
- p. \$70,000 and above
- Refused
- Do not know

F2. Could you tell me if any part of your household income comes from:

- a. earnings from employment
- b. Social Security or Disability (not SSI)
- c. SSI
- d. Regular assistance from family
- e. Other

F3a. If you regularly receive assistance from family, who are they?

F3b. Where do they live? (city/state/country, etc)

F4. Do you regularly send money to any of your relatives...

- a. in the US? Yes No

Who are they and where do they live? _____

- b. in Cambodia? Yes No

Who are they? _____

- c. anywhere else? Yes No

Who are they and where do they live? _____

Those are all the questions I have for you. Do you have any additional comments or questions for me?

I appreciate your time and your help. Your answers and comments are very valuable to me.
Thank you very much for your help.

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VITA

Denise Clark Lewis, MA

Date and Place of Birth

April 16, 1953, Jackson County, Mississippi

Education:

2000	M.A., Medical Anthropology, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky
1998	B.A., Anthropology & Biology, University of South Alabama, Mobile, Alabama, <i>Cum Laude</i>

Research Interests:

Family Exchanges
Intergenerational Relations
Culture and Aging
Immigrant and Refugee Health

Master's Thesis Title:

From Cambodia to the United States: The Disassembly, Reconstruction, and Redefinition of Khmer Identity

Academic and Research Experience:

2003-2005	Executive Director, Kentucky Aging Research and Information Service (KARIS)
1997-Current	Primary Investigator, Cambodian Refugee Community, Alabama
Spring, 2001	Instructor, Food, Culture, and Society (ANT245), Department of Anthropology, University of Kentucky
Fall, 2000	Teaching Assistant, Cultural Diversity in a Modern World (ANT160), Department of Anthropology, University of Kentucky, Michele Rivkin-Fish Ph.D.
1999-2000	Teaching Assistant, Food and Culture (ANT235) Department of Anthropology, University of Kentucky, Deborah L. Crooks Ph.D.
1999	Summer Research Assistant, Department of Anthropology, University of Kentucky, Deborah L. Crooks Ph.D.
1998-1999	Research Assistant, Department of Anthropology, University of Kentucky, John van Willigen Ph.D.
1998-1999	Teaching Assistant, Behavioral Factors in Health and Disease (BSC331), Department of Behavioral Science, College of Medicine, University of Kentucky, H. Jean Wiese Ph.D.
1997-1998	Research Assistant, National Institute for Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, University of South Alabama
1995-1996	Research Assistant, Department of Chemistry, University of South Alabama, John Kerrigan Ph.D.
1994	Undergraduate Research Fellow, Department of Basic Sciences, College of Medicine, University of South Alabama, Warren Zimmer Ph.D.

Academic Honors and Awards:

2004	Best Oral Presentation for <i>Khmer Families in the United States: Filial Piety, Cultural Dissonance and Adaptation</i> . Inaugural Research Symposium, Keeping Pace with the Future, College of Public Health, University of Kentucky (\$150).
2004	National Research Excellence Award, National Extension Association for Family and Consumer Science for <i>A Community Based Solution to Health Disparities in Clark County, Kentucky</i> , with Jennifer Gatz, Beth Hunter, Kim Stansbury, and Laura Stephenson (\$500).
2004	State Research Excellence Award, Kentucky Extension Association for Family and Consumer Science for <i>A Community Based Solution to Health Disparities in Clark County, Kentucky</i> , with Jennifer Gatz, Beth Hunter, Kim Stansbury, and Laura Stephenson.
2004	Montgomery Award, Southern Gerontological Society (\$250)
2002-Current	<i>Sigma Phi Omega</i> National Gerontology Academic Honor and Professional Society
2001	Masters Level Student Paper Competition, First Place, Southern Anthropological Society (\$200)
2000-2001	Teaching Assistant Coordinator Book Award, Department of Anthropology, University of Kentucky (\$200)
1999-2000	Chancellor's Award for Outstanding Teaching for Teaching Assistants, Finalist, University of Kentucky
1999-2000	William Y. Adams Award for Excellence in Teaching, Department of Anthropology, University of Kentucky (\$100)
1998-1999	First Year Graduate Award, Department of Anthropology and Graduate School, University of Kentucky (\$333)
1998 (Lifetime)	<i>Phi Kappa Phi</i> National Honor Society
1997-1998	Outstanding Anthropology Undergraduate Student, University of South Alabama (\$100)
1997-1998	Presidential Academic Excellence, University of South Alabama

Fellowships and Grants:

2004-2005	Fellowship, Kentucky Aging Research and Information Service, Kentucky Division of Aging Services and University of Kentucky (Tuition plus \$15500/yr)
2003	Dissertation Enhancement Award, University of Kentucky Graduate School (\$3000)
2003	Kentucky Women Writers Conference Fellowship, University of Kentucky Graduate School (conference fees)
2002	Thomas P. Rogers Endowment, Project Title: <i>Food Security and Nutritional Risk: Implications for Health among Rural Khmer Elders</i> , Supervised by Laurie Russell Hatch, Ph.D., University of Kentucky (\$5000)
2001-2004	Research Challenge Trust Fund, Kentucky Opportunity Fellowship, Graduate Center for Gerontology, University of Kentucky, (Tuition plus \$15500/year)
Summer 2001	Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowship, Khmer Language Program, University of Wisconsin-Madison, (Tuition plus \$2400)

Summer 1994

National Juvenile Diabetes Foundation Summer Fellowship,
College of Medicine, University of South Alabama (\$3000)

Publications:

van Willigen, John and Lewis, Denise Clark, (2005). *The Cultural Context of Aging*, In H. Yoon and J. Hendricks (Eds.), *Handbook on Asian Aging*, Amityville NY: Baywood.

Schoenberg, Nancy and Lewis, Denise C., (2005). *Ageism in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, In E. B. Palmore, L. G. Branch, and D. K. Harris (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Ageism*, Hawthorn Press.

Lewis, Denise C., (2001) From Cambodia to the United States: The Disassembly, Reconstruction, and Redefinition of Khmer Identity, *Southern Anthropologist*, Vol. 28, No. 1, Pg. 28-49.

van Willigen, John and Lewis, Denise Clark, (1999). *Sources*, *Practicing Anthropology*, Spring, Vol. 20, No. 2. Pg. 55-57.

Invited Presentations:

- | | |
|------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2005 | <i>Outreaching and Inreaching: Bringing the Academy to the Community and the Community to the Academy</i> . Presidential Symposium, Southern Gerontological Society Annual Conference, April 2005, with Graham D. Rowles, Ph.D. |
| 2005 | <i>Caring for the Caregivers</i> . Stephen's Ministries, Lexington, KY |
| 2004 | <i>Family Caregiving in Kentucky</i> . Kentucky Association of Area Agencies on Aging and Kentucky Division of Aging Services. Lexington, KY |
| 2004 | <i>Kentucky Aging Research and Information Service: Highlights of the Kentucky Family Caregiver Needs Assessment</i> . Kentucky Institute on Aging Advisory Council, November, Frankfort, KY |
| 2004 | <i>Cultural Diversity and Social Networks: Optimizing Care in a Changing World</i> , Institute for Geriatric Social Work Conference. Lexington KY |
| 2004 | <i>Preliminary Results of the Kentucky Family Caregiver Needs Assessment</i> , Sanders-Brown Center on Aging, University of Kentucky |
| 2004 | <i>Khmer Families in the United States: Filial Piety, Cultural Dissonance, and Adaptation</i> : College of Human and Environmental Sciences Colloquium Series, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN |
| 2004 | <i>Family Diversity: Khmer Families in the United States</i> , Guest Lecturer, Global and Diverse Families (FSoS3104), Family and Social Science, College of Human and Environmental Sciences, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN |
| 2004 | <i>Highlights of the Kentucky Family Caregiver Needs Assessment</i> , Kentucky Caregiver Coordinators Quarterly Meeting, Louisville KY |
| 2003 | <i>Applied Gerontology: Removing the Boundaries between Classroom and Community</i> , Department of Family Studies Seminar, University of Kentucky, with Jennifer Gatz, Beth Hunter, Kim Stansbury, and Laura Stephenson. |
| 2003 | <i>A Community Based Solution to Health Disparities in Clark County, Kentucky</i> . Kentucky State Extension Conference, |

- Lexington, KY, Co-presenters: Jennifer Gatz, Beth Hunter, Kim Stansbury, and Laura Stephenson.
- 2002 *Social Inequalities, Health and Mortality*, Guest Lecturer, Social Inequalities (SOC235), Department of Sociology, University of Kentucky
- 2002 *A Community Based Solution to Health Disparities*, Sanders Brown Seminar, Co-presenters: Jennifer Gatz, Beth Hunter, Kim Stansbury, and Laura Stephenson.
- 2001 *Khmer Aging: Facing Challenges Created by Social Disruption*, Guest Lecturer, Aging in Cross-Cultural Perspective (ANT580), Department of Anthropology, University of Kentucky
- 2001 *Diversity and Disparity in Health Care: Constructing a World View*, Cultural Competence: Preparing for Cultural Transformation: Health Care in Our Evolving Society, University of Kentucky Area Health Education Center
- 2001 *Negotiated Identities: Ways of Being*, Panel Organizer and Chair, Southern Anthropological Society, Nashville, TN
- 2001 *Negotiated Identities: Khmer Refugees' Survival Narratives*. Behavioral Science Brownbag Seminar, Behavioral Science, College of Medicine, University of Kentucky
- 2000 *The Reconstruction and Redefinition of Khmer Identity through Community Building*. Medical Anthropology Research Group, University of Kentucky
- 1999 *Herbal Medicine: Continuing Use, Changing Context*. Medical Anthropology Research Group, University of Kentucky
- 1998 *Field Work and Faux Pas in a Khmer Community: Do I Shake Hands or Bow?* Medical Anthropology Research Group, University of Kentucky
- Presentations:
- 2005 *KARIS: Kentucky Research and Information Service*, Southern Gerontological Society Annual Conference, Orlando FL.
- 2004 *Preliminary Results of the Kentucky Family Caregiver Needs Assessment*, Poster. University of Kentucky College of Public Health Inaugural Research Symposium
- 2004 *Khmer Families in the United States: Filial Piety, Cultural Dissonance, and Adaptation*: University of Kentucky College of Public Health Inaugural Research Symposium
- 2004 *Transplanted Knowledge: The Intersection of Traditional Medicine and Diabetes Treatment among Rural Dwelling Cambodian Refugee Elders*. Presidential Symposium, Southern Gerontological Society, Atlanta, GA
- 2004 *Rural Environments and Social Networks: Aging in the "Best" Place*. Poster, Southern Gerontological Society, Atlanta, GA
- 2003 *Poverty and Filial Piety: Family Exchanges among Cambodian Refugees in the United States*. Poster. The Gerontological Society of America, San Diego, CA
- 2002 *A Community Based Solution to Health Disparities in Clark County, Kentucky*. Clark County Extension Office, Winchester, KY, Co-presenters: Jennifer Gatz, Beth Hunter, Kim Stansbury, and Laura Stephenson.

- 2002 *Blurred Boundaries between Food and Medicine: Health Strategies of Elder Khmer Refugees in the United States*. The Gerontological Society of America, Boston, MA
- 2002 *Aging in the "Best" Place: Rural Environments and Social Networks*. Society for Applied Anthropology, Atlanta, GA
- 2001 *From Cambodia to the United States: The Disassembly, Reconstruction, and Redefinition of Khmer Identity*. Southern Anthropological Society, Nashville, TN
- 2000 *The Reconstruction and Redefinition of Khmer Identity through Community Building*. American Anthropological Association, San Francisco, CA
- 1999 *Herbal Medicine: Continuing Use, Changing Context*. Poster. American Anthropological Association, Chicago, IL

University and Professional Service:

- 2005 *Ad Hoc* Reviewer, Gerontological Society of America Annual Meeting
- 2004-2007 Medical Institutional Review Board, University of Kentucky
- 2004-2005 Curriculum Committee, Graduate Center for Gerontology, University of Kentucky
- 2004-2005 Chair, Executive Committee, Kentucky Aging Research and Information Service (KARIS), University of Kentucky, Kentucky Division of Aging Services.
- 2004-2005 President, *Sigma Phi Omega, Gamma Mu* Chapter, University of Kentucky
- 2003-2004 Secretary/Treasurer, *Sigma Phi Omega, Gamma Mu* Chapter, University of Kentucky
- 2003-2005 *Ad Hoc* Reviewer, Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology
- 2003-2004 Abstract Reviewer, Southern Gerontological Society
- 2002-2003 Recruitment Committee, Graduate Center for Gerontology, University of Kentucky
- 2002 Facilitator, Kentucky Association for Gerontology Legislative Forum
- Spring 2002 Assistant Editor, Journal of Elder Abuse and Neglect, Pamela B. Teaster, Ph.D., Editor
- 2001-Present Manager/Owner, Gerontology Student List Serve. Graduate Center for Gerontology, University of Kentucky
- 2001-2002 Resource Committee, Graduate Center for Gerontology, University of Kentucky
- 2001 Moderator, National Conference on Undergraduate Education, University of Kentucky
- 2000-2001 Teaching Assistant Coordinator, Anthropology Graduate Student Association, University of Kentucky
- 2000-2001 Co-Chair, Graduate Student Speaker Series, Anthropology Graduate Student Association, University of Kentucky
- 1999-2000 Vice President, Anthropology Graduate Student Association, University of Kentucky
- 1999-2000 Co-Chair, Medical Anthropology Research Group, University of Kentucky
- 1998-2001 Manager/Owner, Medical Anthropology Research Group List Serve, Department of Anthropology, University of Kentucky

1998-1999	Co-Chair, Picnic Committee, Anthropology Graduate Student Association, University of Kentucky
1997-1998	Student Representative, Department of Sociology and Anthropology Academic Standards Committee, University of South Alabama
1994-1996	Student Representative, Department of English Academic Standards Committee, University of South Alabama
1994-1995	Student Representative, Department of Biology Academic Standards Committee, University of South Alabama
1993-1994	Nontraditional Committee, Student Government Association, University of South Alabama
Professional Membership:	
2002-Current	Kentucky Association for Gerontology Public Policy Committee White House Conference on Aging Elder Forum Committee
2002-2003	Southeastern Conference, Association of Asian Studies
2001-Current	Gerontological Society of America
2001-Current	Southern Gerontological Society 2004-2005 Membership Committee 2004-2005 Conference Site Selection Committee (for 2006 Conference)
2001-Current	Association of Anthropology and Gerontology
1999-2003	Southern Anthropological Society
1998-2003	American Anthropological Association Council on Nutritional Anthropology 2002-2003 Secretary/Treasurer
	Society for Cultural Anthropology Committee on Refugees and Immigrants
	Society for Medical Anthropology
1998-Current	Society for Applied Anthropology
Community Volunteer Activities:	
2004-Current	Advisory Council, Foster Grandparent Program/Retired Senior Volunteer Program, Community Action, Bluegrass Region, KY
2004-Current	Advocate for Reform of Medicaid Services Advisory Committee
2003-Current	Board Member, Southern Heights Neighborhood Association, Lexington, KY
2001	Research Coordination Team for Commission on Community Services for Older Persons, Task Force on Long-term Care, Lexington, KY
2000-2001	Mealtime Companion and Reminiscence Group Leader, Nursing Home Ombudsman Agency of the Bluegrass, Inc., Lexington, Kentucky
2000	March of Dimes Neighborhood Mom, Lexington, Kentucky
1990-1998	President, W. R. Clark Memorial Cemetery Association, Forts Lake, Mississippi

Denise Clark Lewis
May 6, 2005